MORAL EVIL IN LONDON

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BY

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PREFACE

THE greater part of the present work is based upon experience gained by the author while assisting in a survey of certain special aspects of the moral problem which has been carried out recently in London.

Many of the views expressed are to be regarded solely as the personal opinions of the writer, who is aware that—as is perhaps natural in the case of such a very difficult and many-sided problem—while his observations will be warmly championed by a proportion of the experts, they will be as bitterly denounced and disclaimed by others.

This book does not purport to be the thesis of an expert, but should be regarded rather as an account of the observations and reflections of a writer who has approached the problem with a very open mind. Since demobilization he has been engaged in sociological studies and in trying to discover what can be done to remedy some of the admitted evils in our midst. The suggestions put forward in the later chapters are not offered in any spirit of dogmatic assertion, but merely as being very well worthy of close consideration and further inquiry by any who are concerned with the solution of problems of morality of whatever kind.

Although they are borrowed from a wisdom of very ancient origin they will be regarded as revolutionary and entirely unorthodox by many workers of the older school. In meeting criticism on this score, however, the writer feels secure in the knowledge that these aspects of the problem are already recognized by some of the advanced workers of all denominations; it is his personal conviction that, as time passes and the work progresses, they will become far more widely diffused and adopted and brought within the scope of practical policy: he is convinced also that upon these lines alone can any real and secure advance be anticipated.

The following account necessarily deals with the problem chiefly as it affects the woman. The responsibility of the man has not been overlooked, but this is a subject for a far wider and more extensive inquiry, and the present work makes no pretence to cover the whole ground.

The author wishes, in conclusion, to express his very deep indebtedness and gratitude to the many workers whom he has found so ready—often at considerable inconvenience—to supply him with information, to make suggestions, undertake research work and to pass on to him, so far as lay in their power, the results of their lifelong experience.

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PART I
IN THE MAELSTROM

CHAPTER I

THE PROSTITUTE

" In the rash lustihead of my young powers,
I shook the pillaring hours
And pulled my life upon me; grimed with smears,
I stand amid the dust o' the mounded years—
My mangled youth lies dead beneath the heap.
. . . My freshness spent its wavering shower i' the dust;
And now my heart is as a broken fount,
Wherein tear-drippings stagnate, spilt down ever
From the dank thoughts that shiver
Upon the sighful branches of my mind.
Such is; what is to be?
The pulp so bitter, how shall taste the rind? "
—Francis Thompson, " The Hound of Heaven."

The Maelstrom, an analogy — In a Russian bordell — In " Hope Alley," London—The bottom of the Maelstrom.

THERE is, off the west coast of Norway, a great whirlpool, known as the *Maelstrom*—" the stream that grinds to pieces." This whirlpool is formed in the sea at certain times by definite, but little understood, conditions of wind, tide and current. It is a fearsome thing to behold, a whirling vortex of irresistible power with a central shaft that spins down to the mud and slime of the very sea-bottom itself. Far out to sea its influence is felt; the currents that serve it draw within its power unwary boats or any floating thing. Nearer and nearer they are borne towards the fatal spot; there is in its action no hurry, no violence—no escape. As the centre is approached the pace insensibly increases until the waters begin to revolve

around the smooth lip of the central abyss. Steeper and steeper grows the angle of descent, more rapid the speed of revolution and louder the shattering roar that booms up from below. In turn they take the final plunge—boats, uprooted trees or drifting flotsam —and disappear from sight.

After a while the central vortex breaks and fills and the dying Maelstrom casts up upon the waters that which it has engulfed—broken, pulped and shattered by the grinding contact with the rocks below.

The moral slough, with a part of which we have to deal, closely resembles this Maelstrom; it is also a whirlpool, created partly by the normal and seasonable tides of human life, partly by deep, uncharted currents and varying surface storms. The whirlpool itself is the central abyss of danger and degradation reached by those men and women who are caught in the drift of the currents that feed it. The Voluntary Rescue Homes and the various rescue efforts of all kinds are islands of refuge set in the drift of the currents; some are placed far from the danger-zone, others are firm rocks jutting to the very edge of the vortex; some are equipped with lifeboats that go forth and search for human flotsam, others more passively await whatever may be cast upon their shores; some are easy of approach, with shelving beaches watched by kindly folk who stand by to help the castaway ashore; others are of less hospitable aspect, having but one narrow and rocky approach: a very few there are whose gloomy shores are often deserted again by those who land thereon as being more forbidding than the uncertain currents from which they should offer a refuge. We shall find that the Maelstrom supplies a very complete and accurate analogy to our problem.

The prostitute is a piece of driftwood circling on the lip of the Maelstrom, drawn gradually and inexorably towards the dismal gulf at its centre. Her life is a truly terrible one—an offence before God and a crying

shame upon Man. She is caught in the vicious circle of her wrong practices; if she aspire to escape from the drift of the current she often slips back again from the very edge of safety for lack of a firm place to clutch. Her life is destructive of all the finer spiritual attributes—a grinding to pieces of the very soul itself.

Leo Tolstoy, in *Resurrection*, graphically describes the life of a prostitute in a bordell in Russia. Let us look at her for a moment with his eyes:

> "From that day a life of chronic sin against human and divine laws commenced for Katusha Maslova, a life which is led by hundreds of thousands of women, and which is not merely tolerated, but sanctioned by the Government, anxious for the welfare of its subjects; a life which, for nine women out of ten, ends in painful disease, premature decrepitude and death.[1] Heavy sleep until late afternoon followed the orgies of the night. Between three and four o'clock came the weary getting up from a dirty bed, soda water, coffee, listless pacing up and down the room in bedgowns and dressing-jackets, lazy gazing out of the windows from behind drawn curtains, indolent disputes with one another; then washing, perfuming and anointing the body and hair, trying on dresses, disputes about them with the mistress of the house, surveying oneself in looking-glasses, painting the face, the eyebrows; rich, sweet food; then dressing in gaudy silks

[1] Flexner's researches do not altogether support this statement. *Vide, Prostitution in Europe*, p. 21. It is probably more true of conditions in England than in a country such as France, where the prostitute is better cared for and is seldom seen on the street. Many English prostitutes suffer from the effects of exposure, and they often die of consumption after five or six years of street life. Tolstoy's statement is therefore a little difficult to understand, unless the women in the bordells in Russia were not so carefully guarded against the special dangers of the life as they are in some other countries employing the system.

exposing much of the body, and coming down into the ornamented and brilliantly illuminated drawing-room; then the arrival of visitors, music, dancing, sexual connection with old and young and middle-aged, with lads and decrepit old men, bachelors, married men, merchants, clerks, Armenians, Jews, Tartars; rich and poor, sick and healthy, tipsy and sober, rough and tender, military men and civilians, students and mere schoolboys—of all classes, ages and characters. And shouts and jokes and brawls and music and tobacco and wine, and wine and tobacco, from evening until daylight, no relief till morning, and then heavy sleep; the same every day and all the week. Then at the end of the week came the visit to the police station, as instituted by the Government, where doctors—men in the service of the Government—sometimes seriously and strictly, sometimes with playful levity, examined these women, completely destroying the modesty given as a protection not only to human beings but also to animals, and gave them written permission to continue in the sins they and their accomplices had been committing all the week. Then followed another week of the same kind: always the same every night, summer and winter, weekdays and holidays."

Most people, on reading the above, will probably consider that here in England we have nothing bad enough to compare with the conditions described. It is true that we have no bordells sanctioned by Government, no veritable brothels,[1] and no open and official recognition of this "oldest profession in the world,"

[1] "In London and Berlin the brothel takes a looser form and amounts usually to nothing more than the casual combination of a few women who utilize their joint premises for carrying on their business."—*Prostitution in Europe*, p. 29.

but we have conditions which are in some respects certainly worse. They are hidden away in odd corners of our big towns; they are not obvious: seen in the mass they would appal.

Here is a picture—admittedly one of the worst—drawn from life during the present year, and in a setting not five miles from Charing Cross:

Two minutes' walk from one of our main London thoroughfares is an area which can only be described as "slum" in the truest sense of that most unpleasant word. It is an area marked by the governing authorities for demolition; it will probably linger, awaiting its turn, for some months to come.

There are here narrow streets and alleys flanked by two-storied houses, all in the later stages of collapse. The walls are cracked and bulged and porous to the damp, revealing in their cheap and crumbling brickwork and sandy mortar those discreditable secrets which the jerry-builder successfully concealed when they were erected at no very distant date. They have not even the honourable decrepitude of old age; theirs is the degeneracy of disease and neglect following all too swiftly upon a weakly and dishonoured birth. Their chimneys lean, their roofs are broken, their walls have no damp-courses, the stone of the window-sills has rotted and fallen away, the arches of the doorways have cracked and sheared, and the line of the roof edges, seen from the end of the row, has a sinuosity that inspires no confidence in their foundations. They suffer, in fact, from every anatomical infirmity from fallen arches to curvature of the spine.

In the paved court between the rows, and on the unclean steps of the doorways a score or two of grubby children of ages from two to ten years, unwashed and poorly clad, are rolling and toddling, crawling in the dust and litter of paper and orange-peel; the older ones are running and skipping, playing "hop-scotch," dancing to a barrel-organ, or throwing or

kicking a ball (which is usually a bunch of paper or dirty rag tied up with string). Dodging among these, and rolling with them in the grime, are almost as many curs of nondescript breed, snapping and fighting, and skirmishing with the cats that slink in the doorways. Every now and then, from the general medley of noise, rises the sharp sound of a childish quarrel, a scream of temper, or the wail of a toddler bowled over by a too boisterous cur. Mothers appear in the doorways, one dashes into the mêlée, seizes her particular offspring, distributes a cuff or two apparently at random amongst the others, and bears her howling charge indoors. For the rest, a few idlers loaf at the corners, slovenly girls and women move from door to door on various errands, or stand gossiping at the entrances.

So much for exterior impressions. It is perhaps an ordinary picture enough of a very poor quarter, a picture which would seem to be more relevant to the housing problem than to the moral problem. But let us make no mistake; all this has a very definite bearing upon the subject in hand: from the daytime conditions those who know about these things will readily deduce the dangers of the nights. It may be that some at least of the young girls and young men who are forced to exist amongst all this squalor have kept their virtue and their purity. It may be that some of those children rolling with the dogs in the gutter, hearing around them gutter talk and absorbing gutter morals, will grow into decent and pure-minded youths and maidens. One question only suggests itself: is it fair to blame them if they do not?

It is not, of course, only in surroundings such as these that the prostitute is made. Surroundings alone cannot create her. She is to be found in nearly every stratum of society. In other walks of life she presents other aspects; she does not always set her favours at a cash value, and therefore she is not always known

by the obvious name. We are not forgetting the existence of these others of the class; we are not suggesting that the living conditions here described are the sole, or even the chief, causes of prostitution. We are merely taking a look at the most spectacular, and to the untrained mind, the most alarming symptoms of the moral disease—peering into the abyss of the maelstrom in an effort to gauge its depth. We will now peer a little deeper still, and come into more intimate contact with our subject proper. This will take us within the dwellings described above.

The first one that we enter is possibly the worst of all. The floor-boards of the entrance passage are rotten with damp, and riddled through and beneath with rat-holes and runs—no relics of a less sanitary past, these latter, but well-used, well-smoothed highways of the night-scavenging sewer-rodent, 1924. The floor of the passage and that of the ground-floor living-room is patched with the relics of some rotten covering material, stained with grease and caked with accumulated filth. There is a litter of paper, ends of string, bread-crusts and miscellaneous debris, giving the impression—which is probably amply justified by the fact—that no effort is ever made to scrub or brush the floors, but that the dirt is merely kicked out at the doors when it has accumulated to the extent of impeding the feet. The peculiarly powerful, sickly stench within the dwelling cannot be described in words; it will readily be recalled by those who have experienced it. The continuous smoking of cigarettes is the antidote which makes further exploration bearable.

Almost everywhere throughout the house the paper is peeling from the damp and discoloured walls, and in many places the plaster has fallen from the ceilings. At the door of the living-room we are met by an elderly man with a cunning face who is carrying a twelve months' old baby, insufficiently clad in

nondescript garments of an unclean hue. He does not welcome our visit, but since it is supported by authority he deems it best to show us a certain amount of civility and to allow us to see all that we wish. He does not attempt to defend the condition of his household beyond saying that it is almost impossible to keep such a place decent—which is untrue—and he lays great stress upon the fact that since he has lived in the house he has never owed a penny for rent.

He shows us into the kitchen, where his wife with her three untidy daughters is preparing a meal. Everywhere there is evidence of dirt and lack of order. The daughters are from eighteen to twenty-two years old; two are decidedly pretty girls, with a frail delicacy of feature that consorts oddly enough with the squalor of their surroundings and the slovenliness of their attire.

The uninitiated or idealistic observer might imagine that here at least were young, untainted minds, forced by poverty to live surrounded but untouched by dirt, vulgarity and crime. If he happened to catch certain low-spoken remarks not intended for his ears he would speedily be disillusioned as to the virgin purity of their minds; were he even a little more initiated in these matters, he might detect in their voices the characteristic husky timbre which frequently denotes syphilitic infection. He would also be able to explain reasonably enough the presence in the upper rooms of certain pairs of new patent leather shoes, a hat of fashionable shape, and a cloak and fur wrap of incongruous smartness.

There are other things also to be seen in these upper rooms. In noting them we must not be over-fastidious; we must not shrink from flashing the light into the lower depths of our maelstrom; even so we shall not be likely to see the bottom.

There are in this house three small upper rooms with one or two beds, or "shake-downs" in each.

The rooms are dark, with very small windows, and there is one minute room, sandwiched in between inside walls, which has no window at all. This is sometimes also used as a sleeping-room.

In these rooms similar conditions of dilapidation are evident. In one damp corner, where the ceiling has fallen in, a strip of sky is actually visible between the bare laths and the broken tiles above them. We are informed that this state of things has existed for three years, and that the landlord has done nothing—beyond collecting his rent weekly. This fact will be considered later with others in another place.

The beds themselves would not be recognizable as such by anyone accustomed to the clean sheets and blankets and spotless coverlet of ordinary comfort. Sheets are of course absent, or unrecognizable. The typical bed is an unmade, tumbled and uneven heap of clammy coverings which are all of one hue—that of ingrained dirt—patched, sodden and stained. Their aroma defeats that of the strongest cigarette.

But *is* it the aroma of the beds, this surpassing stench?

Not altogether. This is the normal sleeping place of two of the girls. Many a wild beast has the instinct to avoid fouling its own lair; not so these unfortunate children of the abyss. The ordinary bedroom night-time conveniences are absent—or involve too much trouble in use. Nature, however, will not pander to human sloth. There is a little open space in front of the small fireplace, investigation shows that the floor here is wet and sodden. This would seem to account for some of the more obvious and insistent unpleasantness that assails our senses in this sickly atmosphere. . . .

Courage! We are almost at the lowest point that we shall reach in our maelstrom, or—a more suitable simile here—in the most foul corner of the Augean Stable. Such conditions as these are unpleasant to

read about, ill to write of, worse to see; to live with—— But if they are to be amended they must be made known.

Raising our eyes from the floor, we take a look at the walls and ceilings. Damp stains, torn paper, low-hanging black cobwebs, cracks and bulges in the plaster—these, of course—but what are those irregular dark patches, like fly-marks on a window-sash, in the angles of the walls—those discoloured perforations eaten through the rotten paper into the porous plaster beneath? They are not made by flies, but by other insects—bugs.

They are here, as in nearly every house in the row, not by ones or twos or by dozens, but by hundreds and thousands at least. In the hot weather particularly are they active; they come forth then in their full strength, ascend to the ceiling, crawl along above the beds, and thence drop down upon the occupants. There are fleas innumerable also; they are not so obvious to the eye, but they very quickly make their presence felt in other ways. There is not much sleep in the hot nights in this row for man, woman, child or infant. Those smoky patches dotted about on the ceiling show where the exasperated occupants have burned their tormentors in a match or candle flame as they clung waiting to the plaster.

To eradicate these bugs no ordinary measures would suffice; they are well established in the walls; they have dug into the rotten mortar between the bricks themselves. They will go when the walls go, not before. One of the minor evils of an evil condition, in its tenacity symbolic of the tenacity of the greater evils and suggestive of the radical measures of cure which in either case can alone be effective.

We now leave the bedrooms, treading warily over their unsteady floors, descend the badly-lighted, steep and rickety staircase, from which the banisters have

in places fallen away, and pursue our investigations in the yard at the back of the house.

This yard measures about ten feet by twenty. It is surrounded by a wall which on one side is at least eleven feet high, and it is badly overshadowed by an adjacent house. In the centre is a choked and evil-smelling drain, littered about with boards and empty tins and bottles; in one corner is a stack of firewood, in another a nondescript collection of rubbish. A lean-to shelter, an extension of the so-called "scullery," projects along one side of the yard with a water-closet at its further end. The condition of this latter corresponds closely with that of the central drain, and it is obvious that the two have been used more or less indiscriminately for one purpose.

A recent half-hearted attempt has been made, possibly in anticipation of our visit, to clear up the litter in the yard. The conditions, therefore, as we find them, can be estimated to be a little better than the normal. An open bonfire of no mean proportions has been lighted against the boundary wall. It has now burned itself out—a heap of flaky-white ashes bounded by a circle of half-burned fragments of grimy rag and odds and ends of rubbish. We cannot tell what concentrated uncleanness lay in this heap before the light was applied. It has gone now. A light air fans the smouldering gleed into a glowing mass and the thought arises unbidden that there, in the heart of that fire, which lately was unspeakable filth, lies the purest spot within these woeful precincts.

Make a bonfire of the whole area!—it would be the swiftest and surest way.

We have now seen the worst that this dwelling can show us. We escape, and breathe again the comparatively pure atmosphere of the court. The other houses are very similar to the one we have explored, some are better or worse in certain particulars; there are few where the conditions are quite so revolting

throughout. In this particular abode there are only six persons living; in some houses of the same size live several families, comprising as many as eleven or twelve individuals, including several babies. It is a common thing to find, in the stale atmosphere of an upper room, two or three babies, too young to play in the street, watched over by an elder brother or sister, kicking and crawling and rolling on the grimy coverings, or wistfully staring out through the semi-opaque glass of the crazy windows at a close view of brick wall and drunken chimney-pots.

A bright playground for children! This is their introduction to a beautiful world, the inspiration offered to the young soul of boy or girl at a most impressionable period of its unfoldment to seize on the good and beautiful and refined things of life and renounce the vicious and the vulgar. We shall glance again at this thumb-nail sketch in monochrome when we come later on to assemble the complete picture.

And now, for one moment we will turn with thankfulness to one serene ray of brightness encountered in this dark, unfathomed cave of human degradation—to a thing of surprise and hope.

One house is clean and orderly and sweet-smelling from its wobbly floor to its rickety roof.

Our surprise is—not that such a thing should be—for one who knows anything of human nature will not be so Pharisaical as to feel surprise at finding goodness or truth at the back of the darkest cave; the surprise is spontaneous and inevitable, like that of a wanderer, lost at night in a snowstorm in a gloomy wood, who should suddenly by some miracle step into high summer noon at the summit of a familiar hill. And hope!—is this not, after all, "Hope Alley"? Such is the legend displayed at a corner of one of its decadent walls.

There is more of hope here, in this house, and in one other, than is to be found in the whole of the rest

of Hope Alley put together. The occupiers, an elderly couple, forced by circumstances to dwell within these noisome precincts, are determined to keep their heads above the mire that surrounds them. No half measures will suffice; the front door is opened only to the most insistent or the official knock. A longer and less convenient, but less frequented, back approach, winding through cleaner ways, is used for daily outgoings and incomings. These two are in the quagmire, but not of it. Living in the midst of filth, they loathe it even as their neighbours tolerate it. And yet, so persistent is the influence of evil, that they may not quite escape it. In the bedrooms the bugs, legacy of a former occupancy, are well entrenched in the walls and will not be dislodged.

Nevertheless, we are here on a firm place, a staunch rock jutting to the very lip of the maelstrom, a place where one circling appalled near the central shaft might catch the glimmer of a guiding light or even hope to clutch a rope thrown out at call.

The gloom again. Next door a woman is coughing out her life in consumption; and opposite, a lad, all but consumed by the same scourge, lies, a mere framework of fevered skin and bone, past the ability to whisper his needs, and for the most part of the day and night alone and untended, awaiting his inevitable and unlamented passing. The sanitary condition of that bed is best left to the imagination.

This latter is a very bad and most unusual case of criminal neglect; it is reported and dealt with promptly by those responsible. Yet it is here, in London, and the calendar marks the year 1924.

Are these things entirely relevant to our subject? They are certainly not included here out of a morbid leaning towards the horrible, or from a wish to disgust the reader. They are, in fact, the lower swirls and eddies of our maelstrom, the currents that buffet and grind and blunt the God-given human conscience

against the hidden rocks of the ultimate deep, and cast it up again, changed out of human or divine recognition. They comprise the sights and the sounds and the atmosphere surrounding the lives of those adolescents of both sexes whose acts are feeding the flood of our problem to-day, of those younger ones whose tendencies are brimming the reservoir of our problem for the future.

Where the value of human purity is so heavily discounted, where the strongest instinct of all—the instinct of survival—is so easily smothered or reversed that the fever-consumed and cough-shattered human framework tamely accepts as inevitable its pitiful condition and looks eagerly forward to an early release, at what price shall be valued maidenly virtue or youthful purity?

The answer comes readily to the pen: the price of the first is variously estimated according to the class, the locality and the personal attractiveness of the individual; the price of the latter is, in exact inverse proportion, a negative quantity!

Hope Alley is truly a place of dreadful influences, a dank forcing-house for every vice in embryo, brooded over by a smothering spirit of evil and squalor. That some refuse to be smothered by the influence of Hope Alley is a justification of its apparently incongruous name, and a standing tribute to the indestructible basic goodness and strength in human nature.

We have already visited the old couple whose house whispers a gentle protest against its associations. There are at least two others in which this whisper is audible. One is kept clean, really clean and orderly, by the unaided efforts of a boy of fourteen. There are in this house also the boy's mother and two sisters. When the boy is away for a time the house degenerates to the pigsty condition and the whisper fades to a reproachful murmur; when he returns the dirt departs

again. Will this boy repel also the spiritual filth of Hope Alley as inevitably as he refuses to associate with its physical grime? There is good reason for hoping that he will. A very slight pressure of the guiding hand would change the expectation to a certainty.

Another house is occupied by a labourer, employed by the London County Council, his wife and babies. The man has moved to this district in order to be near his work, and has become trapped here by circumstances. He is an upstanding, handsome fellow, well-spoken and of fine physique. He has had bad luck recently, and is just recovering from an operation in hospital. The struggle here has been too severe; his house is only moderately clean. There is everywhere evidence of a brave effort to check the encroachment of dirt and disorder; rotten stair-treads and banisters have been repaired with broken-up soap boxes, crumbling walls and corners reinforced with cement and leaky roofs patched and bolstered—landlord's work much of this.

These two have done their best; they are of the few who are ready to take advantage of the chance which may shortly be coming to them to exchange their present surroundings for something better, to remove from this so-called house, which is in reality a mere disintegrating association of leaky roof with four crazy walls, a subtle and ever-present enemy harbouring damp and disease, in league with all the inclemencies of the outside weather and waiting to spring from time to time some new surprise of danger or discomfort in an unexpected place, to exchange this for the more friendly enclosure of a house which can also be honoured by the name of "home," a house with all the kindly attributes which that name connotes.

Hope Alley at night!

If we return to Hope Alley in the late evening we shall find some changes, and the immediate and

intimate relation of its condition to our problem will become more evident. The houses are the same; the courtyard is much the same; there are perhaps fewer toddlers and small babies to be seen, but there are crowds of children still; there is the same restless concourse of mongrels; a few more cats are out, and an occasional bold rat is seen moving warily across a secluded corner. There are more loungers and idlers at the corners and in the doorways; there is more obscene talk. But where are the slovenly girls in their dirty blouses? These are no longer in evidence.

We will stand awhile on the road that leads to the main thoroughfare, a little way back from the House-that-owes-no-rent.

A neatly-dressed girl emerges from the darkness, walking quickly towards us. She is wearing smart shoes and stockings, and has fur at her neck. Surely not a social worker, visiting at this late hour—young, and alone in this lewd place?

As she passes under the smoky street lamp we catch a quick glimpse of a piquant face under a rather flamboyant hat, a face that has in it a suggestion of frail beauty, marred by an over-emphasized pallor of the cheeks and an over-redness of the lips. No, assuredly not a social worker after all.

As she passes she wafts in her wake a perfervid essence, odour of no bloom ever yet purely conceived of sun and soil. At the corner she runs the gauntlet of a band of lounging youths; a shaft or two of unpleasant jest is launched and parried in similar vein. We notice that her voice has that husky quality which may betray to the initiated—that which we remarked earlier in the House-that-owes-no-rent. In due course she is followed by one or both of her sisters, bent on similar adventures.

And so they go forth, by ones and twos, these slovens of Hope Alley, outwardly metamorphosed to something as different from their daytime selves as

are their real selves from that which they strive to resemble. As we watch them go we are seeing the inevitable night-flowering of one particular branch of the tree of sin and crime which is grown and fertilized by each and all of the conditions of that sickly soil into which we have delved by daylight. We cannot definitely exonerate, or solely condemn, any one of these conditions; therefore must we attempt to visualize a picture which includes them all.

It is a matter for a passing surprise that the precincts of Hope Alley can compass such a startling nightly metamorphosis from grub to resplendent night-moth. But in truth the smartness of these girls is superficial enough, the cleanliness apparent only. In the days of their greatest poverty—or greatest extravagance of money too easily acquired—they must retain their stock-in-trade. There may be no food in the house, but new shoes and stockings must be bought; coal may be allowed to run short, cosmetics never; those garments not intended for display may be in rags and tatters, yet perfume must be purchased to add the last allurement, and—since we seek facts—to neutralize an odour which might repel.

So they go forth, the prostitutes of Hope Alley. At intervals they return—not alone. What type of man do they bring to those evil-smelling, dank and vermin-ridden upper rooms?[1] Presumably some of them are sober enough to appreciate their surroundings. It is almost inconceivable that any but the most drunken or degraded should not turn away at the latest moment.

Those walls and ceilings! Those populous beds! Would the rash, adventurous youth who meets one of

[1] It is by no means in every case that the girl takes her associate home; she more often goes with him to some well-known haunt in the district—to dark bridge arches, empty railway wagons left on sidings or to other places of this kind. Some, however, do return home with the men they meet in the street.

these imposing sirens of Hope Alley in the open air of the high road, ere she has cast her spell over him, join company with her if he knew whence she came or whither she would lure him? Such knowledge might supply a useful check. There are other purely sordid aspects also of the contemplated act which he may not have fully realized. Can they not be suggested to him? We shall consider this possibility later.

That the sordid traffic continues to flourish under such conditions is sufficient proof—if proof be needed—that the man from whom the demand originates is at least as responsible as is the siren who lures him.

. . . . . .

We comfort ourselves perhaps that there are in this country no licensed vice-houses, or bordells; the brothels in London are few, and scarcely recognizable as such. We rightly determine that such plague spots shall never defile our social fabric; shall not be permitted to cater for, and thus extend, the present demand for vicious indulgence.

The description from Tolstoy, quoted above, of Katusha Maslova's life in a Russian bordell is revolting enough. The author states that it is a true picture, drawn from life. Such an existence, apart from its sinfulness, has a soft, sickly—almost slimy—quality which is abhorrent to the healthy-minded. It represents to the vast majority of people the lowest idea of degradation which they are able to conceive. Yet, as the writer has attempted to show, we have something worse—far worse—than this in our midst.

Presumably Katusha and her unfortunate colleagues were reasonably cleanly at least in their persons and surroundings, there were no leaky roofs or decomposing walls; disease, if introduced, was at once segregated and eliminated.

It is true that a life of luxury and vice is in some ways a much more unpleasant thing to contemplate than a life of vice in a setting of squalor; but from the

point of view of the moral and physical degradation of the individual and of danger to the community, it is suggested that the " Hope Alleys " of London and elsewhere are more terrible in their effects than were the Russian bordells of which Tolstoy gives us so vivid a picture.

CHAPTER II

LOOKING UPWARD

" Ah! must—
Designer infinite!—
Ah! must Thou char the wood ere Thou canst limn with it? "
—*Francis Thompson, " The Hound of Heaven."*

The destruction of dirt, material and spiritual—A chemical analogy—The cleansing flame—The prostitute: the most spectacular (and superficial) symptom of moral disease in a community—A definition—Her relative significance —Those in the abyss—Those in the danger currents— Relative importance in efforts at reclamation.

HOPE ALLEY is to be destroyed: the governing authority has decreed it!

A benevolent authority may demolish the damp, rickety and dangerous dwellings, they may scatter to the four winds the ingrained filth of generations, break down the verminous brick and plaster, exterminate the lice and the fleas and the bugs and the rats and lay the site open to the blessed sun and rain; they may raise thereon in due course " model dwellings," with concrete floors and stairways and on every landing great ventilating grilles open to the air; they may even provide bathrooms: and yet, when they have done all these necessary and excellent things, the real task of purification is not begun.

Will the former residents of Hope Alley return to

occupy the new model dwellings? Some of them may do so. If so, a small number of these will find, as we have seen, their longed-for and well-merited opportunity to make for themselves surroundings more nearly resembling their conception of a home. The others, retaining their former habits, will foul these model dwellings as they would inevitably foul a palace or a pigsty. Their condition will be a little less dreadful, that is all, and their justification for wallowing a little less evident.

And, in considering these conditions, particularly in these modern days when the tendency is to throw the blame largely upon landlord and capitalist, it should ever be borne in mind that there is by no means always to be found for this wallowing in the mire the justification of destitution. A landlord here and there doubtless fails in his duty; he should at least maintain his property proof against rain and damp; but he can scarcely be blamed for failing to put in new doors, banisters or other fittings when he knows that they will quickly be disfigured and destroyed even if they are not broken up and used for firing.

One instance, typical of many, occurs to the writer as exemplifying the utter improvidence prevailing in some of the households we are considering; the inability of these people to save money when it comes their way or even to spend it intelligently. In a family consisting of the father, mother, one son and four daughters, everyone was in employment, the mother forsaking her home duties to work for a few hours as charwoman. The following were the normal approximate weekly earnings of the various members: father, £3; mother, 20s.; son, 25s.; the four girls together, £6. Thus there was a total sum of £11 5s. coming into the house every week, a sum of which many a hard-working professional man with a family would be very glad indeed to be assured. How this

money was spent or squandered was not obvious, since there was not to be seen in that house one stick of decent furniture and the house itself was filthy from top to bottom.

Poverty is not by any means necessarily to be looked for in every case as the natural accompaniment or the prime cause of squalid living conditions; neither does the figure of the neglectful or overbearing landlord loom nearly so largely in the foreground of the picture as he is usually painted by popular prejudice. Poverty should be abated and the landlord should be forced to do his duty to his tenants, but if we are seeking a cure for these evil conditions, we must search very much deeper than either of these measures will take us.

Truly the brick-and-mortar slum may be removed, but not necessarily that slough of the spirit which engenders it. This latter is a blind canker on the finer perceptions of the soul, a monstrosity conceived by some obscure downward tilt in the individual, latent perhaps in many of us, but nurtured and matured here by failure in affairs, bad health, bad luck, bad company, hard treatment, injustice, loneliness, monotony, despair: all these factors, and many others, lead ultimately to—Hope Alley.

We may pull down the material slum; we may destroy the material uncleanness—and we spread the spiritual uncleanness, with the spread of the inhabitants, over the face of our city. The tendencies may be diluted, they may even in parts be neutralized by contact with better conditions and cleaner ideals, but they will not be destroyed so long as they can find or make for themselves a material slough in which to wallow again.

How to attack this uncleanness and inertia of the Mind? Would that it could be blotted out by the same process that we use to destroy the tangible filth which it produces. There is often a strong similarity

between Nature's processes in different media. Is there no analogy here? There is more: there is our answer—*by the same process that we use to destroy tangible filth.*

We stood in the most unclean precincts of Hope Alley and found there, in the heart of an open fire, purity itself. Dirt has been defined as "matter out of place": that is a full, sufficient and scientifically exact definition.

On this earth there are a limited number of elemental substances, each utterly pure in itself—substances forming in right combination clean and wholesome compounds. It is only when they are wrongly placed, in opposition to an unchanging law, that dirt is evolved. And the most unclean mass which it is possible to conceive, reduced to its elements by the cleansing agency of fire, is, after all, only so much carbon, so much hydrogen and oxygen, nitrogen and potassium, or whatever it may be, each released element now as pure as it was in the beginning and fit to re-combine at once in the formation of the most pleasant compound. The dung and rottenness that we place at the roots of the vine or the rose or the peach tree, decomposed and transmuted by a process of natural alchemy, reappears unrecognized in the bloom on the grape, the delicate savour of the peach or the colour and fragrance of the flower. Dirt, then, is matter misplaced, and the transformation from dirt to desirability, from repulsiveness to attractiveness, involves merely the re-shuffling of the atoms of a compound, the laying aside of some elements and the taking up of others.

This is not a mere digression into the realms of chemistry; it leads us to an analogy which may supply some useful thoughts. If material dirt is matter misplaced, what is spiritual dirt, or vice? It is surely *thought* out of place, misapplied.

There are within the scope of the human intelligence

and emotions a limited number of elemental ideas and tendencies which are, as are the chemical elements, utterly pure and good in themselves. These ideas and tendencies are stirred into activity by external or internal stimuli, either by contact with the material world on the one side, or with the realms of the essential spirit, the individual and undying *ego*, on the other. They are associated, combined, re-assorted, into desires or compulsions by the individual intelligence, the responsible and reasoning self, and are expressed as actions through the power of the will.

It is from the abnormal and unhealthy association of these ideas and tendencies into undesirable compounds that all spiritual uncleanness arises. These compounds, these evil impulses and desires, are expressed in the material plane either as sins of commission, engendered by a super-abundance of one particular thought-association of an undesirable quality, or they manifest as sins of omission, made possible by the absence of some other energizing or balancing element. Thought is often regarded as an intangible and elusive thing; yet wrong compounds in the realm of thought appear to be even more stable and difficult to break down into their elements than are physical compounds. Material filth usually disintegrates spontaneously; vicious thoughts tend to flourish and grow for a time like stubborn weeds in the mind.

Nevertheless, our analogy holds good. The only sure way to substitute right thinking for wrong and vicious thoughts and desires is to break down the latter—in most cases this can be done by the purifying fire alone—and set free their basic elements to re-combine to form a more desirable product.

Evil thoughts, smouldering in the mind, growing to a certain intensity and manifesting as ill deeds, tend ultimately to set light to their own funeral pyre. There are times in the lives of many people when this

cleansing flame is spontaneously ignited; such times as when, for example, an unmarried woman first realizes that she is to become a mother, or when a young girl, discovered by her parents to be leading an irregular life, is disowned by them and banished from her home. The life of a man has similar moments, inflamed by different circumstances. These are the crucial times when the rescue worker should be at hand to watch the flame as it consumes and resolves the erring thought, and after it has died down, to guide the sufferer's mind in the moulding of a purer conception.

In such moulding human effort may assist; the alchemy is of God.

. . . . . .

In attempting to cure a dangerous disease it is well first to discover how far that disease has progressed, to seek at the outset to learn the worst. When the position has been exactly gauged it may be that those symptoms of the patient which are the most alarming from the spectacular point of view will receive scant attention from the doctor in charge of the case. He will concentrate on removing the prime causes of disorder. The spectacular symptoms, although distressing in themselves, may then lose much of their terror from the very fact that they are partially ignored.

Similarly, in considering those problems and diseased states of the social system which arise out of the prevalence of sex-irregularity, we should attempt first of all to dispose of the more sensational symptoms and to relegate them to their proper place in order of importance; we shall thus guard ourselves against surprises and distractions, and put ourselves in a better position to search for the root-causes of the trouble we are seeking to eliminate.

Undoubtedly the most spectacular symptom of moral disease in a community is the prostitute. The

prostitute manifests in many degrees and forms; the most obvious of these forms is the nightly street-walker, the avowed and regular "professional," who relies solely upon her trade for her support.

Apart from the professionals there is a very large proportion of women engaged in honest employment who resort occasionally to prostitution as a means of eking out a meagre wage, and are thus only partially dependent upon it financially. There are others who use it as a means of obtaining luxuries; these will often receive payment "in kind"; they may never walk the streets, but they are prostitutes none the less. A definition seems to be needed here, and Flexner[1] gives us a very logical and excellent one. He says:

> "I shall consider prostitution to be characterized by three elements variously combined: barter, promiscuity, emotional indifference. The barter need not involve the passing of money, though money is its usual medium; gifts or pleasures may be the equivalent inducement. Nor need promiscuity be utterly choiceless; a woman is not the less a prostitute because she is more or less exclusive in her associations. Emotional indifference may be fairly inferred from barter and promiscuity. In this sense any person is a prostitute who habitually or intermittently has sexual relations more or less promiscuously for money or other mercenary consideration. Neither notoriety, arrest, nor lack of other occupation is an essential criterion. A woman may be a prostitute even though not notorious, even though never arrested, even though simultaneously otherwise employed in a paid occupation."

Thus there can be no doubt that the street-walkers comprise a proportion only of those who must be

[1] *Prostitution in Europe*, p. 11.

classed as prostitutes, while prostitution in itself includes merely a comparatively small section of the whole of our problem. Yet it is by the numbers and importunity of these women of the streets, and by this test alone, that the uninitiated will commonly judge the morals of a city or a nation.

It is upon this particular manifestation also that enthusiastic, but possibly ill-advised reformers will sometimes direct their energies, urging the adoption of measures of suppression which usually result only in driving the obvious evil into more covert retreats, while leaving the vast bulk of the problem entirely unaffected.

The prostitute is an unpleasant symptom. She is a symptom which we should earnestly endeavour to remove; but no remedy will succeed in removing her which does not first attack the deep-seated causes from which she has evolved.[1] These causes are almost as old as Time, and as intricate as human

[1] "Any civilized society utilizing the resources and instrumentalities that every such society has within its reach, can, if really so minded, ultimately reduce prostitution and its ravages (so far) by direct action.

"It is well worth doing: it is, humanly speaking, a possible undertaking, even though, I repeat, nowhere as yet by any means accomplished. Let us not, however, deceive ourselves into thinking that such a direct frontal attack absolves us from effort in other and different directions. Further achievement depends upon alteration in the constitution of society and its component parts. In so far as prostitution is the outcome of ignorance, laws and police are powerless; only knowledge will aid. In so far as prostitution is the outcome of mental or moral defect, laws and police are powerless; only the intelligent guardianship of the state will avail. In so far as prostitution is the outcome of natural impulse denied a legitimate expression, only a rationalized social life will really forestall it. In so far as prostitution is due to alcohol, to illegitimacy, to broken homes, to bad homes, to low wages, to wretched industrial conditions—to any or all of the particular phenomena respecting which the modern conscience is

nature itself. For the moment we must regard the prostitute as a superficial indication of an abstruse functional derangement.

The prostitutes of Hope Alley, and of all other "Hope Alleys," are in the Maelstrom: there is still open sky above and there is help at hand if they could but see and would but clutch it. A large proportion of them will escape in due course,[1] but they will first descend very far into the darkness, and when they break away, they will be shattered and scarred and blunted by the mill.

Some of them are doomed for the abyss: nothing but a superhuman effort and a totally disproportionate expenditure of energy could save them—disproportionate, not by any absolute measure of the value of reclaiming effort, but by relative, since, for every one in the maelstrom, there are a hundred, a thousand, perhaps many thousand, others already caught by, or perhaps stepping foolishly into, one of those insidious, relentless currents that draw inevitably towards that same abyss. A smaller effort than would suffice to restrain one from the ultimate plunge may turn or stay the current for a many of these.

Therefore we must look well into the maelstrom from time to time, in order to keep in the forefront of our minds a picture of that which we are aiming to

becoming sensitive—only a transformation wrought by education, religion, science, sanitation, enlightened and far-reaching statesmanship can effect a cure."—*Prostitution in Europe*, p. 401.

[1] "Prostitutes disappear rather than die . . . only a small part, it is uncertain of what size, remain prostitutes; a small fraction marry, a much larger fraction return to work; those who stick to the business wind up as the servants of younger prostitutes, occasionally as brothel-keepers; a few of them are found as aged hags, offering themselves for a copper coin below the bridges of Berlin or in the dark corners of Whitechapel."—*Prostitution in Europe*, p. 23.

remove, and also lest any hand be held out suddenly for help or any cry be raised; but, for the most part, we must use our available strength to combat the currents that lead up to it, to pluck out those still struggling against the drift and to strive to stay the current's drift itself.

And, of these currents, some are fast and some are slow and sure; some drift openly—surface currents these, well-marked with human souls for floating buoys; and some drift deep and secret, but draw their victims none the less. These also must be plumbed and charted. In the far-distant time, when every drift that human force can reach is turned or stopped, we shall find that our great maelstrom has lost half its power, or vanished altogether—and that our most spectacular symptom, the prostitute, has disappeared also, the subtle influences that created and maintained her having been neutralized.

In a later chapter an attempt will be made to give a name to some of the currents that lead to the maelstrom, to gauge their depth and width and strength and relative danger; to suggest what means may best be employed to survey them, to turn or stop them, and to set counter-currents in motion.

At this point we will cease to consider the lower grade of prostitute, figuratively described as caught in the maelstrom, and turn to a practical account of those others in London who have recently been found in the grip of the current and of the attempts which are being made to bring about their reclamation.

PART II

IN THE MAIN STREAM

A Survey of some of the Rescue and Preventive Activities in the London Area

CHAPTER III

THE VOLUNTARY HOMES

The Rescue and Preventive Homes—Types of Homes: Emergency Homes, Maternity Homes, Long-stay Homes, Short-stay Homes, Hostels, Homes for inebriate rescue cases, Homes for cases of venereal disease, Preventive Homes—Rescue or Prevention?

DURING the course of a recent inquiry into the work of the Voluntary Rescue and Preventive Homes within the Metropolitan Area[1] a large amount of information has been obtained concerning the girls and women who are assisted by these Homes. Most of these women are already struggling in the grip of the currents that lead to the maelstrom of moral destruction; others are those who have been found stranded in dangerous places and taken in and sheltered upon one of these islands of refuge until such time as they may have been trained to navigate the perilous waters in safety.

The latter are either very young girls; girls whose surroundings have been such as to lead them almost inevitably astray, or those who have exhibited early tendencies towards wrongdoing.

[1] Undertaken by the *Central Council for Rescue and Preventive Work in London*, 117 Piccadilly, London, W.1. A preliminary report, based on this inquiry, and entitled: *Report on the Work of the Voluntary Rescue and Preventive Homes in the Metropolitan Area*, issued in December, 1923, is published by the above *Central Council*.

It must always be remembered that the girls and women dealt with by these Homes, great as are their numbers in London alone, represent a proportion only of the mass of those who are drifting within the danger-zone. Many—and it is quite impossible to estimate how many—girls and women in all grades of society, given to intermittent or consistent wrong-doing, do not come within the ken of the rescue workers at all. Some are toying with the swirls and eddies at the edge of the danger-currents; in some cases they may be held back from any calamity by good fortune, by their own saving sense, or by good guidance and example, but a proportion of them must inevitably be swept into the stream.

The whole problem is so complicated, and the gradations in character between the avowed prostitute on the one hand and the merely foolish and irresponsible coquette, who may or may not ultimately develop into an actual or virtual prostitute on the other, are so imperceptible that it is obviously an utter impossibility to obtain facts which will give us anything approaching an accurate estimate of those within the danger-zone. We cannot even define the limits of the danger-zone itself: it varies with each individual. The issues which would be involved by an attempt to analyse all dangerous tendencies of character are so wide that we shall be compelled here to confine our observations within certain well-defined limits. We shall consider, therefore, only those who, whether through their own fault, their ignorance, or through the fault of others—usually, but not invariably, men—are found to be in imminent danger and unable to recover themselves unaided. The vast majority of the girls and women found at the Voluntary Rescue and Preventive Homes come within this category.

There are at present within the Metropolitan Area, i.e., the Metropolitan Police District and the City of

London, 151 Rescue and Preventive Homes[1] of the particular types we are considering. These vary as widely in scope and character as do the individuals with whom they are designed to deal.

Their work ranges from the somewhat mechanical and impersonal functions of great Emergency Shelters and Common Lodging Houses on the one hand to the close personal care and supervision of the Long-stay Preventive and Rescue institutions on the other. In the former, cheap food and shelter is offered night by night to all and sundry, and little opportunity for the exercise of any moral influence is here available. A girl may stay at one of these Shelters for a single night and never return again, or she may hire a bed nightly for years on end. In any case she has her whole day free for her own devices and merely sleeps, and sometimes breakfasts, at the Shelter. In the latter the girls are all of one general type—those in need of moral support—and they are sheltered within the institution for periods varying from one to three years. They are helped and trained—effectively or otherwise, according to the various methods and convictions of the administrators of each Home—to the end that they may be equipped to govern their own lives.

In type the Homes are found to vary from shabby, dilapidated and meanly equipped eight- or ten-roomed houses in the poorer quarters of central or east London to large and luxuriously appointed mansions in the residential suburbs, with acres of private gardens and grounds, and every advantage that ample funds can provide. All—large or small, mean or prepossessing

[1] It should be remembered that the numbers and the activities of the Homes are always liable to rapid variation; changes will undoubtedly occur even while this book is in the press. Up-to-date information can always be obtained by those interested upon inquiry at the offices of the *Central Council for Rescue and Preventive Work in London*, 117 Piccadilly, W.1.

—are instigated and maintained by religious impulse;[1] are administered by those who have heard the call to human help and service for the benefit of those others whose need for help and guidance is great indeed. Although the administration may not in every case attain the highest possible efficiency, although the methods applied may in some cases be antiquated or otherwise open to criticism, the angle of view a little warped, or the religious zeal here and there somewhat over-obtruded, both the good achieved and the evil prevented are alike incalculable.

Of very few indeed of these institutions can it be truly said that their closure would involve no loss to the community.

Types of Homes

The Voluntary Homes may be divided, according to the nature of their work, into eight main types or classes, some combining the functions of more than one class. There are:

1. Emergency Homes (entire or partial).
2. Maternity Homes (of three kinds).
3. Long-stay Homes.
4. Short-stay Homes.
5. Hostels.
6. Homes for Inebriate Rescue cases.
7. Homes for cases of Venereal Disease.
8. Preventive Homes.

1. The true Emergency Homes, already referred to, are intended chiefly for the temporary shelter of homeless women and girls. Perhaps their chief

[1] With the exception of one or two purely medical Homes.

distinguishing feature is that they are available, as long as a bed remains vacant, to admit at a moment's notice any well-conducted applicant without reference or any formality whatever. A small charge, varying from fivepence to one and twopence per night is usually, but not invariably, made for a bed, while supper or breakfast or both may either be given free or supplied at a nominal price.

One of the largest of the Emergency Homes has an accommodation of 253 beds, and affords over 88,000 separate night's lodging per annum. The beds in these Homes are usually arranged in several large dormitories. The floors of the rooms are scrubbed daily, and are scrupulously clean. The bed coverings are as clean as it is possible to maintain them under the circumstances.

There is in the East End one Shelter, with a record of usefulness dating back to the year 1885, where the old-fashioned wooden "coffin" beds, with leather mattresses and sheep-skin coverings are still in use. This is a refuge for the very poorest classes; the conditions here are decidedly rough but eminently suited to the local need. This Shelter is opened from November 1st to April 30th and, although its doors are not unbarred until four-thirty in the afternoon, it is usually completely filled by five o'clock. This house, although the accommodation is not large, meets a very pressing need and, in addition to providing free shelter and food to both men and women, carries out a most useful work in finding employment for applicants where possible, and also in supplying the needy with clothes and boots sent in for distribution by sympathizers who know how bitter is the need for such gifts during the winter weather.

Most of the larger Emergency Shelters are thrown open during the late afternoon or early evening and cleared again at about eight-thirty or nine o'clock in the morning. Some allow applicants to lodge only for

a certain number of consecutive nights; others have no restrictions of this kind.

There is also a number of smaller Emergency Receiving Homes, maintained by certain agencies, where girls and women are lodged for a few days pending inquiry into their needs.

Owing to the rapidly changing population at the great Emergency Shelters it is obviously not possible for any very complete information to be obtained regarding the personal histories of the girls and women who hire beds therein. They are made use of by women of very various types and of all ages. There come here respectable girls, temporarily in straitened circumstances owing to unemployment, girls earning very small wages, sellers of matches, street-singers—street-walkers. It may be remarked in passing that it is not an unknown occurrence for one of the latter who has been refused admission to a Shelter owing to inability to pay the charge to return and enter later, having been more successful in plying her trade. This appears as a curiously anomalous state of things in a Shelter administered by a religious organization. It is difficult, however, to see how it could be avoided, since where a charge for admission is made, the rule must obviously be adhered to, while, so long as the price of admission be tendered, it may not be refused, even if it be also the price of shame.

Some of the women, notably of the street-trading type, are regular habituées, making the Emergency Shelters their homes and returning there nightly sometimes for years on end. For this reason those Emergency Shelters, six in number, which are Common Lodging Houses, licensed by the London County Council, are not to be considered as very intimately involved with our problem. They are well-conducted and orderly institutions to which a stranded or reclaimed girl or woman may be sent in an emergency, but from which she should be

transferred to a more suitable place at the earliest opportunity. This also applies to the smaller receiving Homes of the various agencies.

In addition to the Homes whose *raison d'être* and sole function is the temporary shelter of homeless women, almost one-quarter of the Homes of all types in London reserve a small proportion of their accommodation to meet cases of urgent need. These thus become in part specialized Emergency Homes upon lines according with the nature of their primary functions; some accept at short notice emergency maternity cases, women stranded with babies or older children, women infected with venereal disease, or other special cases.

In spite of the activities of the large Shelters and the supplementary emergency work carried out by other Homes, the provision of this kind in London is still far from adequate and rather loosely organized; much delay, discomfort and anxiety to applicants would undoubtedly be avoided if more accommodation could be made available, or even if the present accommodation could, by the co-ordination of effort, be more effectively utilized.

2. *Maternity Homes*

The Maternity Homes are divisible into three distinct types:

(*a*) Thirty-four Homes receiving unmarried mothers for a period before or after confinement, or both, the confinement taking place away from the Home.

(*b*) Twenty-two Homes admitting women with their babies after confinement only.

(*c*) Ten Homes accommodating maternity cases before, during and after confinement, the confinement taking place at the Home.

At the Homes of the first type unmarried mothers are received several weeks before confinement and stay at the Home for a corresponding period afterwards. In such Homes of the best type the influence of the responsible matron or superintendent is directed towards bringing the girl to realize the serious nature of the responsibility in which she has involved herself, and at the same time making her see that, although she may have committed a rash and foolish act and sometimes a sinful one, she has not necessarily condemned herself utterly and eternally. The latter attitude of mind prevailed and flourished in the " penitentiary " type of Rescue Home not very many years ago; happily it is now very seldom encountered. The keynote of the best Maternity Homes to-day is sober responsibility combined with hopefulness, and practical help for a brighter future; the sordid and vulgar aspects so often associated with the situation in ignorant minds are suppressed, while the beautiful and creative nature of the privilege of motherhood is emphasized.

Many of the girls received at these Homes, particularly those of a non-vicious nature, who have been betrayed through little or no fault of their own, whether under promise of marriage or otherwise, arrive in a very critical nervous or mental condition. They are intensely depressed and upset, sometimes hysterical, or even suicidal, saying and believing that life holds no further joy for them. Some of them are little more than children; occasionally mothers aged fifteen years, or even less, have to be dealt with.

At one Home it has been deemed necessary to fix a strong net across the well of the staircase on the first floor in order to remove the temptation to self-destruction which might be offered by an unprotected opening: an ominous discovery this, suggestive of the potency of the life-forces with which we have to deal.

A highly disturbed state of mind is obviously most

inimical to prospects of healthy motherhood, and it is one of the chief concerns of the matron to bring about a more composed mental attitude among those who feel their position very keenly.

On the other hand, there is a proportion who appear to regard their plight far too casually and to take everything that is done for them too much as a matter of course. These are often found among those women who have already had one or two illegitimate children, girls who are by nature devoid of any sense of responsibility, or who have adopted for themselves, or come unduly under the influence of, a low moral standard. Such girls need a different treatment, a firmer and less sympathetic attitude; moreover, a guard must be set lest they impart their irresponsible outlook to others. For this reason some Maternity Homes rigorously exclude all "second-fall" and "third-fall" cases.

It will be realized even from the above, which gives only the most skeleton outline of the facts, that the position of the matron at a Maternity Home is not an easy one to fill successfully. Apart from the very special knowledge and experience which are required, a very strong character, with a sympathetic and infinitely patient and understanding nature, are absolutely necessary to success—the kind of personality, in fact, which inevitably draws confidences, unsought but freely given. The matron of a Maternity Home is never off duty. She is constantly in touch, not only with the girls living at the Home; their parents and relations, sympathetic or adamant; their lovers, repentant and helpful, casual, untrustworthy, or actively hostile, but with many others also who have already passed through her hands. Her duties are endless; the work she does is limited only by her personal energy and endurance. She has also not seldom to struggle against additional and unnecessary difficulties in the shape of meagre

funds, deficient equipment, and sometimes, unhappily, mistakes and lack of understanding of the work and appreciation of her efforts on the part of those—of her Committee or others—set in authority over her.

It is no exaggeration whatever to state that the moral and spiritual success of a Maternity Home is far more dependent upon the character of the matron and the members of her staff most closely in touch with the girls than upon abundance of funds, amenities of equipment, comfort, or any other circumstance whatever.

It is also happily possible to state that the results achieved by the sixty-six Maternity Homes of all kinds in London go to prove that, with very few exceptions—four at most—the right women have been chosen to fill these very difficult posts. These remarks apply perhaps more particularly to those at the head of the Maternity Homes, of whatever type, but they are true also, in greater or less degree, of all the Voluntary Rescue and Preventive Homes in London.

At those Maternity Homes which receive only girls after confinement the problem is a little different in degree, but not in its essential nature, from that at the " before-and-after " Homes. Girls usually come to the former Homes with their babies a short time after the baby is born. They may have had their confinement at a Maternity Hospital, at the house of a friend, or at their own home. Sometimes the girl may not have been properly prepared mentally for the event which has overtaken her; she may exhibit either an over-sensitive and depressed or over-confident and casual frame of mind; her attitude towards the child may be right or wrong. All such inequalities need to be smoothed out—without haste and without pressure, without harshness and without undue leniency—by the tactful and persevering efforts of the matron and her staff.

Again, at those Maternity Homes where the confinement takes place at the Home, the work is both more easy and more difficult: easier because the girl remains within the influence of the Home for an uninterrupted, and usually longer, period; also because her confinement in most cases brings about a serious and receptive frame of mind combined with a sense of gratitude for all that is being done for her and a wish to show her appreciation by a generous response: it is more difficult on account of the far greater amount of work entailed and the special nature of some of that work, the greater vigilance, the special accommodation required, the "hospital standard" of cleanliness demanded, the extra expense involved and the diligent care called for by the presence of a number of very young and delicate babies—many prematurely born—of mothers who need to be taught the very alphabet of nursery duties.

It is not an uncommon thing to hear persons who know nothing of the work of these Homes ask:

"What is the use of the Homes? Why do they need to keep the girls for months on end? And what can they do that the Maternity Hospitals and Infirmaries cannot do?"

Such blundering criticism certainly appears at first sight to be scarcely worthy of notice, but it is widespread enough to call for an effective answer. It arises partly from a perhaps natural ignorance of the magnitude of the problem of the unmarried mother and of the work of the modern Homes. It is partly also a relic of the days when public opinion in these matters was far more hypocritical than it is to-day; when the atmosphere of the Homes themselves was very different and the primary aim of many of them was undoubtedly the conversion of the supposedly ungodly at a time when the said ungodly were placed in such an unfortunate position that they were forced to render lip-service at least to the preachings of

conversion for the sake of the comparatively meagre material help and protection which might go with such preachings.

The best reply to such criticism would be to take the critic to visit a modern Maternity Home. The next best would possibly be to point out that the justification for the existence of the Maternity Rescue Homes lies in the following: firstly, that while they have accommodation, they endeavour, either by their own efforts or with the aid of certain specialized organizations, to make their facilities known to all who may be in need of the help that they can give; secondly, that, to an unfortunate girl, lost and bewildered by the worst trouble that an unmarried girl can be called upon to face, not seldom evicted and disowned by her parents, deserted by her lover, penniless and distracted to the verge of self-destruction, they can hold out things of priceless immediate worth; for the body—food and shelter from the storm; for the mind—light in the darkness, human sympathy, and the ripe understanding which can guess more than half the story before it is related, knows, and fills in the silences with sure knowledge, anticipates and minimizes the worst fears and difficulties ere they are expressed; and—most priceless gift of all—for the soul—a restored hope in the future, a giving again of the vanished courage and self-respect. It is a very miracle of mothering—a miracle which should properly be performed by the girl's own kith and kin if they had the needful understanding and sympathy: unfortunately the latter are found in many cases to be so godly and respectable in their own estimation that they dare not soil their immortal souls by associating, in her hour of greatest affliction, with their erring daughter—who, as often as not, has erred through their fault or deficiency as much as through her own.

These facts alone would surely suffice to justify, if

justification be needed; but let us make the case complete. After this immediate and most practical help, ever ready at the Homes, there follows day by day a gradual building-up of moral fibre as well as of the physical resources, a steeling of the courage to face the dreaded ordeal of a first and illegitimate birth, with all its inevitable associations of regret and shame; more than this, there is given also a sane interpretation of the best code of conduct, designed for future use, bringing with it a realization on the part of the unfortunate of the need for self-control and the inhibition of wrong or loose tendencies in the future. It is a gradual correlation of the principles of religion—be the denomination what it may, so it be broad enough and human enough—to the facts of daily life: character building.

Follows the sometime dreaded crucial event itself and, after the event, more care and instruction and sound counsel; more character building. When at last the time arrives for the young mother to leave the shelter of the Home and to face the world again—no longer alone, and yet more handicapped in every material way than if she were alone—the genius of the Home is still at her elbow. Employment is found for her, and arrangements made for the care of her baby during the hours she is at work. Finally—but there is no finality, for it is always open to her to visit the Home when she wills—she may ask advice, receive temporary help or shelter while changing her situation; she may write or call at any time and be sure of a sympathetic answer or welcome. The house, in fact, has ceased to appear to her as a Home; it has become a home.

It may be objected that this is too highly-coloured a picture, that the average Rescue Home falls far short of this ideal. It is true, of course, that not every Home reaches the highest standard; it is equally true that no mere verbal description can hope to do justice to some of the work which is done in

Homes such as these. Yet if it be granted that one Home alone out of the sixty-six Maternity Homes does such work as we have indicated—and the proportion is vastly higher than this—surely it were worth while maintaining sixty-six, or six hundred and sixty, partial successes in the hope that, by a happy combination of the best factors, one might thus splendidly excel.

In actual fact many a matron or superintendent could show series after series of letters of spontaneous gratitude from former charges, letters such as would at once qualify the Home for inclusion in the highest class.

Such, then, is a faintly-traced outline merely of the good which is effected by the Maternity Rescue Homes —the best picture we can produce without the clear-cut drawing of facts and figures and case-papers. It should give the most stubborn and prejudiced critic pause to think and inquire. And yet our case is not quite complete; there are two aspects of the matter. We have treated of the good that is done; what of the evil that is avoided?

We will not deal with generalities here. Let us take just one human story—a single happening, contrasting what was with what should have been. In Piccadilly there is, and has been for some years, a national organization which specializes in dealing with unmarried mothers and their children.[1] This organization is in close touch with Maternity Rescue Homes throughout the country. Here valuable advice can be obtained. Many and various are the problems presented to the Secretary, or her confidential assistant; many a situation bristling with difficulties is taken into capable hands and successfully smoothed out. If, here and there, in a particularly

[1] *The National Council for the Unmarried Mother and her Child*, Carnegie House, 117 Piccadilly, London, W.1.

difficult case, a satisfactory solution is not achieved, it is owing either to the character of the applicant herself or to the fact that at present no machinery exists for dealing with the particular circumstances: of such cases more will be said anon. Here then, in Piccadilly, in the year 1921, was a special organization with an open door, an agency able and willing to help any girl in her trouble, to protect her interests and minimize her dangers.

Not half a mile from this building, also in the year 1921, in a servant's room in a Mayfair house, a girl, untended and alone, gave birth to an illegitimate child which straightway died under suspicious circumstances. She had kept her condition secret even to the ultimate hour, presumably in the hope of concealing it altogether. She was sent to prison and arraigned on the capital charge. A Police Surgeon in giving evidence said that her sufferings must have been awful and prolonged. This physical agony followed on long months of anxious suppression of her secret and intense dread of the coming event. Deserted by her lover, she shrank from confiding in anyone. Happily she was acquitted on the grounds that, if guilty, she was not responsible for her actions when she committed the crime.

It requires little imagination to visualize the terrible nature of this evil thing which happened four years ago—almost within a stone's throw of a central organization for the Maternity Homes in the country—to a girl who did not know that she was within easy reach of advice and help. This was an evil which the Maternity Homes, through no fault of their own, failed to prevent. It ought not to have been possible in a civilized community, but—a similar thing might happen again in London to-morrow.

If there were no Homes there would be no such practical advice and help available; no accumulated experience stored in a central organization. Con-

versely, the more Homes there are, up to the limit of the need, the better organized and co-ordinated they are and the more widespread the knowledge of their activities, the less probable does it become that such a tragedy of ignorance could ever happen again.

"What is the use of the Homes?"

Surely this one happening is a justification, sufficient in itself, for their existence, and the strongest possible argument for their support and development.

A very great deal might be written of these Maternity Homes. The above is merely a short and incomplete description of their special characteristics. Other facts, applicable to these Homes as well as to others, will appear when we come to consider the work of the Homes as a whole under more general headings.

3. *Long-stay Homes*

Next for consideration are the Long-stay Homes. There are included in this definition those institutions where girls and women reside for consecutive periods of one year or longer. They number thirty-five, and they fall into two classes. Twenty-one are purely Preventive Homes, accepting only innocent, and usually young, girls; the remainder deal with rescue cases, and among these are numbered three of the Maternity Homes already considered, one Hostel, one Inebriate Home and four Homes dealing with cases of venereal disease.

The Long-stay Homes within the Area are, as might be expected, mainly situated on the outskirts of London or almost in the country itself. The nature of their work does not demand, as in the case of some Homes of other types, that they should be so easily accessible to the more populous districts, nor is this

desirable. Most of them are found to be large houses —one has accommodation for two hundred and twenty girls—with extensive, and often very beautiful, grounds. A large proportion of these Homes are founded and maintained by religious Orders and administered by a Mother Superior and a Sisterhood. There is in all such an atmosphere of peace and repose, a sense of remoteness from the outside world comparable only to that which must exist in a convent.

Indeed some of them are veritable convents. The reposeful atmosphere and the association with the quiet-spoken Sisters must seem like an experience of another world to a young girl drawn from sordid and undesirable surroundings. It will be joyfully welcomed as a haven of rest, or resented as monotony unendurable, according to individual temperament; the saving clause is that most of the girls, when they enter, are very young, and therefore adaptable.

This sheltered atmosphere, with its subdued half-light on life is undoubtedly eminently suited to meditation and prayer and the cultivation of the spiritual faculties but, as will be suggested again later, it would seem doubtful whether it can always provide that equipment of moral stamina and character which should be the chief asset of a girl who is destined shortly to take up her life once more in the outside world.

As to the good intentions and the high aspirations of those who administer these convent Homes there cannot be the smallest doubt. The Sisters devote their whole lives utterly and unreservedly to the work and often draw to a considerable extent upon their own limited means also in order to provide better conditions or to give more happiness to their charges.

In many cases it was found during the inquiry that those responsible for the conduct of these Long-stay

Homes realize the doubtful advisability of immuring their youthful charges, many of whom are totally ignorant of the facts of life, in such sheltered surroundings for a lengthy period and then sending them out to fend for themselves without suitable preparation and, in some cases, without having given them sufficient warning regarding the dangers they are likely to encounter. The Mother Superiors are, on the whole, very ready to welcome any suggestions for lessening this danger, and if any competent advisory body for the whole problem should in due course become recognized, there can be no doubt that such a body could effect a very great deal of useful work by the exercise of its influence in this direction alone.

4. *Short-stay Homes*

The Homes classed as Short-stay Homes, at which the girls and women remain for periods less than one year, but usually more than a few days, number thirty-two. The Maternity Homes, which would almost all fall within this category, are excluded from this total, since they have already been classed separately. The thirty-two Short-stay Homes are chiefly those which do not readily fall within any other specialized class. Their function lies half-way between that of the Emergency Shelters and that of the Long-stay Homes, but does not very closely resemble either. They are chiefly Rescue Homes, i.e., they deal with girls who are already given to wrongdoing: five of them, however, are set apart for preventive cases.

Their purpose is largely to act as a halting-place for those girls and women who have chosen the wrong path—as a backwater whither they may turn from the dangerous currents, wherein they may rest awhile and

reconsider and gain strength to battle against the stream when they once more adventure forth alone.

The task of the matrons of these Homes is no sinecure. It is theirs to help the girl of unstable character to choose for herself between the easy and superficially-attractive life of wrongdoing and the harder and less brightly illuminated way of honest work. They do not succeed in every case, since success in every case lies not within the bounds of human endeavour. But they never relinquish hope, and many a girl returns again and again to a Home after successive lapses, until at last she stands upon firmer ground. It is a point of honour also among the matrons that employment shall be found for every girl who needs it and is suited for it when she leaves the Home, and the success which they achieve in nearly every case in this difficult matter of placing the girls is more than surprising.

5. *Hostels*

There are within the Area fifteen Homes, including the large Common Lodging Houses already described, where hostel accommodation is available for varying periods. This means that the girls are able to live at the institutions, either free or at a very low rate, and thence go out to daily work. A Home of this kind supplies a very great need in the case of those girls, lately reclaimed from an irregular mode of life, who are not yet earning sufficient wages to maintain themselves in lodgings or at a boarding-house.

If they are not able to make use of some such accommodation they are continually hovering on the brink of calamity, exposed to the temptation to supplement their meagre earnings by easy but illegitimate means. In the smaller Homes of this type the girls and women naturally come under

the direct influence of the matron, whereas, at the larger Common Lodging Houses, any surveillance is difficult if not impossible. Many Hostels act also as Emergency Shelters, accepting at short notice urgent cases, even if they permit them to remain only for a few days.

Special Hostels for the accommodation of unmarried mothers and babies, or for cases of venereal disease, have their own particular part in the scheme, and their work will be considered in another place.

6. *Inebriate Homes*

A certain, not very large, proportion of the girls and women in London who are in need of moral reclamation are also victims of the drink or drug habits. To meet the special needs of these there are five Homes which concentrate upon such cases. The total accommodation of this kind within the Area is not very large; two of the five Homes take a proportion of ordinary inebriates in addition to those who are also rescue cases. Most excellent work is done in these institutions and the trouble is attacked upon the most modern and enlightened lines. This question, however, forms a very small part of our whole problem and does not call for particular attention here.

7. *Homes dealing with Venereal Disease*

The problems arising out of venereal infection are extensive and diverse, and considerable attention must be given to this subject, both here and in a later chapter. As regards the accommodation available for such cases, there are altogether twenty-four Homes which make some special provision for girls and

women suffering from venereal disease; seventeen of these—including one Home for children only—are entirely devoted to this work. The Homes, with certain notable exceptions, do not themselves provide very much in the way of actual medical treatment for these diseases. Their usefulness chiefly lies in the fact that they are open to admit and care for supposedly non-infectious, or not very serious, cases which could not be admitted into other Homes, and that they also arrange for the regular medical supervision and, if necessary, treatment of such cases at a convenient clinic.

A number specialize in maternity cases affected with venereal disease; some permit a long stay at the Home, while one affords hostel accommodation for those who are in a non-infectious condition and able to go out to daily work.

In addition to the voluntary accommodation of this kind there is also the large Women's Hospital for Venereal Disease at Sheffield Street, which is maintained by the Metropolitan Asylums' Board, and is open to receive among others the more serious cases encountered by the Rescue Homes.

The problem of the disposal and treatment of women and girls afflicted with venereal disease is a very difficult one. Separate accommodation of each type appears to be a necessity, since it is obviously highly undesirable that these cases should be housed with others who are free from the disease. There have existed a very few Homes where such a mingling of infected and non-infected was permitted, and at least one of these still remains. It will probably be agreed, however, that, even although the most stringent sanitary precautions—such as separate dormitories, distinct crockery, linen and cutlery, etc. —be adopted, combined with scrupulous cleanliness, the risk remaining is too great to be allowed while other solutions can be found. The least relaxation of

the necessary precautions is liable to magnify the danger a hundredfold.

The writer is aware that it is easily possible to over-emphasize the risk of syphilitic infection which the normally healthy person runs in using crockery, etc., which has been used previously by an infected person and imperfectly cleansed. The chances are, happily, small, and certain definite conditions must obtain before infection can thus be transmitted. If this were not so there would, in view of the prevalence of the disease, be great risk in taking a meal at a coffee-stall, at any of the more popular tea-shops and restaurants—where some of the staff and clients are almost certain to be infected—or indeed, if the whole truth were known, at many of the more pretentious establishments also.

The casual risk is almost negligible, but, on the other hand, there is a considerable difference between the casual risk, which may be encountered almost anywhere, and the constant danger to which those may be exposed who live continuously under the same roof and in close association with syphilitic persons. The chances are considerably increased, and an incident which occurred during the war may be cited to illustrate this.

Of the many ladies who volunteered for work in canteens some were employed to wash up crockery in a particular camp where the percentage of venereal disease among the men was suspected to be very high. After a time certain of these helpers developed sores on their hands which they attributed merely to the effect of the unaccustomed work. Fortunately these were noticed by chance by an inspecting official who strongly urged a medical examination. The diagnosis proved syphilitic infection contracted from the handling of infected articles. The trouble was dealt with in good time and prompt treatment effected a cure. This is an isolated case which probably has many

parallels. It goes to prove that the danger of infection is by no means negligible in conditions where a number of infected persons are congregated. It is therefore suggested that no Home should be encouraged to receive healthy women and those suffering from venereal diseases under the same roof.

There is, on the outskirts of London, a Home which is doing a quite unique work amongst a very pitiful class—the very young children who, through no fault of their own, have become infected with one or other of these terrible diseases. This Home is suitably placed amidst country-like surroundings, splendidly equipped for the very difficult work and administered by a highly skilled staff. Cases of syphilis and gonorrhœa between the ages of three and fourteen are accepted.

Most of the children received here come from various hospitals, and a large proportion of them are cases which the hospitals have been unable to treat successfully. The Home accommodates twenty-seven children and, in spite of the policy recently adopted of excluding very serious, chronic or congenital cases, and of discharging all cases as soon as they are judged to be non-infectious, there is always a waiting-list for admission.

It is a fact worthy of note, particularly by those who are disposed to question the utility of the Voluntary Homes, that in London alone the entire work of one Home is devoted to the care of these young children, many of whom have been desperately wronged and handicapped for life by a dangerous and terrible malady; that, even so, the accommodation for known cases of this kind is insufficient, while the number of undiscovered and neglected cases is an unknown quantity. Surely here there is work crying to be done.

8. *Preventive Homes*

Thirty-six of the Voluntary Homes are reserved for preventive cases only; that is to say that they do not admit any girl who has been convicted, or is suspected of, wrongdoing. At the majority of these Homes the girls stay for long periods. The conditions prevailing have already been outlined under the description of the Long-stay Homes. There are a few Preventive Homes, including one Hostel, where a comparatively short stay only is usual. Girls and women admitted into the latter are generally those who are not so much in need of preventive training and character building as of temporary material assistance. The preventive work in such cases consists largely in the offering of safe harbourage and temporary help and advice to girls in financial or other difficulties who might otherwise wander into dangerous surroundings or bad company.

It is an ancient maxim that "prevention is better than cure," and it is probable that, if it were not for the work done in the large and small Preventive Homes in London, the number of the Rescue Homes would need to be very considerably greater to cope with the magnitude of the evil.

Prevention indeed—as regards both sexes—should be the very foundation of all effort to combat this social evil; the great and present difficulty is that there is so much urgent rescue work continually clamouring to be done that, while workers are called upon to meet these emergencies of the hour and the day, there remains to them very little time or energy to take thought for the ills of the future and very scant funds also for the materialization of plans for the circumvention of threatening evils.

It is as if one should attempt with limited resources to dam a great river that had burst its banks while continually distracted by the cries of the drowning in the flood and hampered by the necessity of with-

drawing from the chief work to go to their assistance. The work of the Preventive Homes, and all other preventive effort at present established should be regarded, then, as a firm foundation whereon in due course shall be erected, stone by stone, and as the emergency permits, a strong barrier heading off and confining the menace. Every effort which can be transferred from the task of rescue to that of prevention represents a double gain and is a promise of the time when preventive work shall be the first consideration and the necessity for rescue work shall only arise comparatively infrequently.

CHAPTER IV

The Voluntary Agencies—Total accommodation available at the Homes—Homes lost—New Homes founded—Co-ordination of the work—The Central Council for Rescue and Preventive Work in London—Sizes of the Homes—Ages of the Homes—Locations.

THE question will arise in the mind of the reader as to whence springs the impulse for the inception and maintenance of the work of the Voluntary Homes. In London these Homes are administered by various Agencies or by independent effort. The following Agencies are responsible for maintaining or co-ordinating the work of a number of the Homes:

1.	The Chelmsford Diocesan Association	4 Homes.
2.	The Church Army	10 ,,
3.	The Female Aid Society	5 ,,
4.	The Jewish Association for the Protection of Girls and Women	4 ,,
5.	The London Diocesan Council	33 ,,
6.	The London Female Preventive and Reformatory Institution	4 ,,
7.	The Mission of Hope	2 ,,
8.	The Rescue Society	4 ,,
9.	The Rochester Diocesan Association	2 ,,
10.	The St. Alban's Diocesan Association	3 ,,
11.	The St. Anne's Catholic Settlement	2 ,,
12.	The Salvation Army	16 ,,
13.	The Southwark Diocesan Association	13 ,,
14.	The West London Mission	2 ,,
15.	The Young Women's Christian Association	2 ,,

The remaining Homes are maintained either by

their own Committees, by certain religious Orders, by Borough Council, or by charitable effort of other kinds.

The total accommodation of all kinds afforded by the 151 Homes within the Area is considerable, amounting to 4,195 beds for adults and 735 for infants and children. Two years ago the accommodation was still larger, since no fewer than 23 Homes have recently closed down, while only six new Homes have been opened. A somewhat serious aspect of this retrograde step is that more than half the Homes lost were Maternity Homes. The loss of accommodation on balance during these two years has amounted to nearly 400 beds and 33 cots. These Homes were nearly all lost owing to lack of funds to meet the expenses of the work and it is probable that if their activities could have been made known more widely, and their value recognized by the general public, this unfortunate set-back would have been avoided.

Co-ordination

Except in the case of certain groups affiliated to an Agency inter-communication between the Homes and co-ordination of their work is, generally speaking, conspicuous by its absence. Less than half of the institutions are on the telephone. While many of the matrons and superintendents strive to keep in touch with other Homes of similar type, at least in their own neighbourhood, there are others who work in "water-tight compartments," taking in those applicants whom they happen to encounter, dealing with them in their own way, and in some cases displaying little interest in work which is being done elsewhere or in new developments.

This attitude is probably inevitable; it is a relic of other days and older methods; it survives here and

there but it will in time inevitably give place to the general progress.

In this connection, however, it is obvious that such progress can be immeasurably assisted and hastened by the efforts of a central co-ordinating body, such as the recently formed *Central Council for Rescue and Preventive Work in London.* This body aims, not only at co-ordinating and assisting the work of the Homes, but also at capturing the interest, and where possible, the co-operation and help of official bodies and governing authorities and of the public also.

Sizes of the Homes

The Voluntary Homes vary in size from an Emergency Home with an accommodation of one bed only to one Long-stay institution with a total of 329 available beds. The average is about 33 beds. The small Home referred to serves a very special purpose. It is located in the West End close to one of the worst districts frequented by street girls. A worker of one of the large Agencies has a room at this house, and thence she patrols the district and endeavours to get into touch with any young girl whom she observes to be adopting the immoral life, or with any prostitute who may be ready to abandon her calling; if she is successful in influencing a girl she brings her immediately to the Shelter before she has time to doubt or reconsider, passing her on the next day to a more permanent abode where her particular needs may be better supplied.

The influencing of these girls is a difficult and delicate task. It is not every day that the workers succeed, but when a girl displays a readiness to listen to better counsels it is imperative that no time should be lost, and no merely practical difficulty of accom-

modation should be allowed to endanger her chances. This modest Emergency Shelter therefore has a very special function and justifies its existence if only one street girl in twelve months passes through its doors to a more hopeful existence.

This is by no means the only Home where reclaimed prostitutes may be taken in, but it is peculiar in that it is maintained solely with the object of reclaiming street girls or those in imminent danger of becoming such.

The Homes where very large numbers are accommodated are chiefly Emergency Shelters or Long-stay Homes. In Homes of the type of Maternity Homes, or those others where girls who are very much in need of special care and influence stay for a comparatively short time, it is usually found that better results are obtained if the numbers are kept fairly low; the ideal number is very generally considered to be about six or eight: in such Homes a really home-like atmosphere can be created. The girls get to know the staff and each other really well and are all in close personal touch with the matron. The management of small numbers does not call for unduly severe discipline, and the staff are able to do a great deal to make the life in the Home cheerful and attractive.

Where very large numbers are received, as in some of the Long-stay Homes, the girls are sometimes divided into " wards " of ten to fourteen individuals and each " ward " is placed under the special care of one of the staff. The discipline in these Homes is also necessarily more severe, and more hard and fast rules and regulations are essential for the maintenance of order. The difference between large and small Homes, in fact, resembles that difference in atmosphere noticeable between a small private school and a large public one.

Under the larger schemes, be the administration never so human, the atmosphere created is inevitably

more "institutional" than homely, and in this connection it must not be forgotten that the characters of some of the girls are such that they can only be dealt with effectively when subjected to a fairly rigid discipline. The need for careful selection is indicated in order that, so far as possible, each girl may be sent to a Home of such size and character as is most suited to her particular temperament and needs. In practice such an ideal selection is often impossible, but this consideration is obviously an important factor affecting the success or otherwise of the training provided: here, again, a central co-ordinating body could render invaluable assistance.

Ages of the Homes

Several of the Homes at present existing have been carrying on their work continuously for more than a century. The *Magdalen Hospital*, situated at Streatham, was founded in the year 1758. This is probably the oldest Home in London. Six others at least date back to the period 1805 to 1850.

The *Magdalen Hospital*, so called, is now administered very much on the lines of other Homes of its class, the medical work done being confined to arrangements for the continuation treatment of a small proportion of not very serious cases of venereal disease. The danger referred to above accompanying the association of such cases with uninfected women is probably reduced to a minimum here. The girls are divided into "wards" of fourteen individuals, classed, according to their character and progress, as "probationary," "intermediate," or "finishing." They stay two years, and the Home is entirely free. It is a fine building, well situated in its own grounds and with its own private chapel. A visit to this Home,

which is typical of many others, gives the impression that the girls are well cared-for and happy, and that the Home is a most successful one with a long record of useful work in the past.

Fifty other Homes, founded previous to 1900, are still active, and a number of others commenced work between that date and the commencement of the war. Eleven Homes were inaugurated during the period of the war.

From 1919 to 1922 we find the rather large number of twenty-three new Homes opened. This accentuation of rescue activity was probably rendered necessary by the aftermath of bad moral conditions left by the war in almost every large city, and made possible by the post-war release of energy and funds for combating these conditions.

One of the most interesting of the old-established Homes visited by the writer is *The House of Charity*, in Greek Street, Soho, which dates from the year 1846. This is a house very different in character from most of the others under consideration. There is accommodation here for twenty women and ten men. The house is intended chiefly for those of the educated classes who are in temporary difficulty. No charges are made. References are required for admission and approved applicants are invited to stay for fourteen days, it being understood that they will leave at the end of that time unless asked to stay on. The work is largely of a preventive nature in so far as temporary shelter and assistance in finding employment is offered to many a respectable woman who might otherwise drift astray.

The house itself is really old, splendidly appointed and most remarkably decorated, and has one of the most beautiful small private chapels to be seen in London. It certainly came as a surprise to the writer to find in an institution of this nature priceless old furniture and other antiques which would arouse envy

in the heart of many a collector. There is also here one of the old "crinoline" staircases, the iron balustrades being bowed outwards from the top in order to allow free passage to that, happily obsolete, article of feminine attire.

At a Shelter of this kind a great many different types of applicant are met with; many a tragedy is encountered and many a life-story of hard luck or hard treatment is unfolded; comedy also is not entirely absent. Guests admitted may vary in type from a distracted girl, who has attempted to commit suicide by swallowing a whole bottle of aspirin tablets, to a wealthy foreigner, temporarily on the verge of starvation owing to some breakdown in his banking arrangements. Those in charge of such a Shelter have to be ever ready to deal with a situation brought about by any probable or improbable chain of circumstances that life can produce.

Another old-established Home supplying emergency shelter in this district, and technically falling under a similar classification to the above, may be noticed here as offering a wide contrast and illustrating the divergence in the nature of the work. Founded in 1885, it is a Home with accommodation for ten women only. Any case is accepted and no references are required. The length of stay is limited to six weeks. The women making use of this Home are mainly prostitutes; there are also business girls, domestic servants and nurses, etc. Many of the latter types are those who have taken shelter in the crypt of the church of St. Martin's-in-the-Fields and have been passed on by the rescue worker in charge there. Most difficult cases are received here; very many are girls from Piccadilly and the Strand and most of these have no intention whatever of allowing themselves to be influenced, merely utilizing the Home as a convenient shelter when all else fails. The most that can be done in such a Shelter as this is to assume the

bona fides of all applicants, to attempt to find them employment where needed, and to keep in touch with all cases of hopeful aspect.

Amongst a total of 151 Homes, mainly of excellent standard, it is a little difficult to assign a reason for selecting any particular institutions for detailed description. It is impossible to describe them all, and yet each Home has some interesting feature or peculiarity of its own. It is perhaps natural that some should make a deeper impression upon the mind of the inquirer than others of equal value, and it is possible that the description of these may for this reason be more likely to enable the reader to visualize the conditions found.

The first two referred to above are noted largely on account of their historical interest; others will from time to time call for particular notice by reason of some notable feature or characteristic illustrating a special aspect of the work. Each Home visited reveals some new thing, either in itself or in its work, and to the uninitiated inquirer, a round of visits supplies a continuous succession of educative surprises.

Location of the Homes

Nearly all these Homes are situated within the boundaries of the County of London, which is, of course, less extensive than the Metropolitan Police District which forms the limiting area of our survey. They are more densely distributed in the North-Eastern and South-Western and central districts than elsewhere. The South-Eastern outlying areas are not so well supplied with accommodation. These facts do not suggest that Homes have sprung up just where they were most needed, since there are many districts

where the need is great still poorly supplied with such accommodation; moreover, it is not always possible for suitable premises to be acquired in exactly those regions where it would seem that a Home could most advantageously be founded.

CHAPTER V

Religious observance and instruction at the Homes—Instruction versus stimulation—Texts—Conditions of admission — Charges — Numbers dealt with — Factors affecting numbers of entrants—Medical provision—Work done by inmates.

As religious impulse is in the main the energizing principle of this work it may be of interest to compare the numbers of the Homes administered under various denominations. Ninety-eight are Church of England Homes, fifteen Roman Catholic, sixteen administered by the Salvation Army, four Jewish, and seven of various other denominations. The eleven Homes remaining are described as undenominational, or are unable to carry out any religious observance owing to the exigencies of their work.

At the Maternity and Long-stay Homes attendance at classes for religious instruction is usually compulsory, and all the girls are required to attend services. At many other institutions, particularly at the Emergency Shelters, Short-stay Homes and Hostels, attendance at religious observance is entirely optional. In nearly every Home in London one room is set apart for devotional purposes, and a number of Homes are found to possess private chapels, some of these being very beautiful.

The girls and women are often found to be surprisingly ignorant of religious matters and unacquainted with even the basic facts of scriptural teaching or the most familiar Bible stories. Many are

said to be anxious to learn and to appreciate fully the instructional classes.

There can be no doubt that the handling of this very important matter of religious teaching is one of the most difficult problems which those engaged in this work of reclamation are called upon to solve.

There can scarcely be any dissent from the premiss that the possession of religious conviction of some kind is the greatest possible help and stand-by to a girl who has to fight an uphill battle against her own unfortunate tendencies or the press of material circumstances, or both. Indeed, a creed—even though it be a mere personal and social code of conduct—based on a dim elementary realization of the nature of right and wrong, is far more than a valuable asset; it is utterly indispensable if the effort is to be stoutly maintained when the close influence of the rescue worker is withdrawn. It is of more permanent value than any number of vague threats or warnings as to the punishment awaiting wrongdoers either here or in the hereafter.

Remains the vital question as to how such conviction is to be imparted to girls who may never in their lives have given these matters a serious thought, or—more difficult still—to those who have been brought up in an atmosphere where such things, and all connected with them, were openly derided.

Is it by compulsory instruction of a dogmatic nature that this delicate matter is most easily to be adjusted? It may be that compulsory classes are necessary in the first instance in order that the girls may be induced to give a hearing to such instruction at all. The writer would suggest, however, that, if the first compulsory class attended does not arouse in a girl a keen interest in the subject and anticipation of the next class, either the teacher is so unsuitably equipped for the task that no amount of compulsory instruction from the same source will have any beneficial result whatever, or the

girl is as yet in a state of development which renders her unready for any spiritual awakening.

The weak point of the system at present widely in use both in the Homes and elsewhere appears, in fact, to the writer, to lie in the very word *instruction* and all that it connotes. Firstly, it assumes the possession of superior and authoritative religious knowledge which the instructed has every right, but often no opportunity, to question. The present is an era of intellectual emancipation and logical inquiry, and the instructed assumes the right to say in effect to the instructor: "What justification have you for laying down the law to me? You can offer not one item of proof in support of your statements, and I submit that you know not one whit more of so-called spiritual matters than I do."

Such an attitude of mind is none the more easily combated in that it is not usually expressed; moreover, it is very often justified, in fact, by the ignorance of the would-be teacher of the very subjects in which he or she professes to instruct. Compulsory teachings of this kind, based on dogmatic assertion and alien to reason, may produce in the instructed an attitude of dumb acquiescence and endurance—born of expediency; alone they will never pierce the hard shell of mental reservation which they are bound to encounter.

It is admitted that Faith is the first of the three major virtues; as such it is often invoked as necessitating the acceptance of dogma; it is suggested that many well-meaning preachers do not realize that blind and unreasoning acquiescence is by no means synonymous with true Faith—the foundation of which is often best laid upon the rock of correlated facts. Neither can Faith be assumed like a garment at the dictates of another; it must rise from within.

It is suggested here, and it will be more fully argued later, that if *instruction* is the wrong principle to

apply to this problem, a more hopeful one is *stimulation*. The two parents of true education have ever been a mark of exclamation and a question-mark —arrest and wonder—all down the ages. If a teacher can first stimulate interest, and then inquiry, into a matter of such absorbing personal interest as, for example, the possibility and nature of existence after death, he will at once gain a sympathetic hearing. He should then proceed, not by making unprovable assertions from the pedant's dais, but by moving in adventurous spirit *with* his class, rather as an explorer in an unknown cavern, a leader who may be able to find the distant light.

But such a method presupposes definite qualifications on the part of the teacher; he must first have learned how to teach, he must have been shorn of all petty sectarianism; and, most important of all, he must have been instructed in those theories regarding the spiritual nature of man which, to those who have arrived at a realization by the road of faith, have long ceased to be mere theories; those same ancient hypotheses which in this age of enlightenment are daily assuming more and more the character of known facts to those who are arriving at a realization by the alternative path of the intellect. The writer wishes to state here quite definitely that he does not refer to the alleged proof offered by misleading and misunderstood spiritualistic manifestations but to other indications of a more reliable nature which are discussed more definitely in the last two chapters of this book. The point which he wishes to make here is that a form of religious instruction—usually a very narrow and limited form—is still, here and there, although by no means generally, carried on by teachers who have no qualifications whatever beyond the faith that is in them—a faith which may in some cases be so strong as to be almost a direct revelation, in others merely an orthodox belief which has grown upon them, like the

armour of a tortoise, as a result of their temperament and upbringing—a poor, untried thing, shielding them against the buffetings of the world rather than drawing them with its piercing and revealing illumination to a glad and intelligent co-operation in the working of natural law. The present generation, in its mental emancipation demands—and rightly—at least some few rational, definite and non-contradictory statements upon which to set up the creed which it is expected to accept. Only when the teacher is in a position to supply these will success be assured.

The above argument applies incidentally with even greater force to the religious teaching which is being disseminated in the old way in many places besides the Rescue Homes—greater because the higher the intellectual level of the hearer the less is he or she likely to be influenced by mere dogmatic assertions and repetitions.

While the attitude towards religious matters displayed by the Homes to-day is undoubtedly far in advance of what can best be described as the "hell and damnation" outlook of the older penitentiaries, this latter in a modified form undoubtedly retains a firm footing in certain places.

At a very early stage in the inquiry work the writer formed the opinion that, whenever he entered a Home and found the walls of the rooms studded with framed scriptural texts and pictures of religious subjects to the exclusion of all other forms of pictorial decoration, he would also find the outlook towards religion there to be in some degree warped or confined. He is still of opinion that this rule provides a reliable guide throughout, with the possible exception of a few establishments where the failure to remove such decorations was accounted for more by inertia, or by lack of any suitable substitutes, than by a belief in their efficacy. In any case it seems a policy of doubtful expediency to expose and familiarize in the

early stages of rescue work, and in an atmosphere which is often one of incredulity or even mockery, those words, principles and truths from which a girl may afterwards draw much comfort and strength if they are presented to her at the right moment and in a manner more suited to the dignity and vital importance of the subject.

If the reader will call to mind the wording of a few of the texts more usually displayed and picture these hung on the walls of dormitories and common-rooms, which in some cases are inhabited by a very mixed population; if he will use his imagination to visualize the mental attitude of these girls, the kind of discussion which unavoidably takes place among them at times, and the comments to which such printed matter may give rise, there will surely awake in his mind a grave doubt as to the wisdom of allowing them to remain.

This matter of the display of texts certainly appears to be of no great importance in itself, but it is often to be regarded as the proverbial straw, giving an indication as to the attitude adopted towards this important question of religion.

Conditions of Admission

The conditions regulating the admission of girls and women into the Homes are various. On the whole the restrictions, apart from those necessarily arising from specific work, are very few. Disqualification on the grounds of creed are in the main non-existent. Of the Church of England Homes, eight only make a rule definitely excluding Roman Catholic girls, while four of the Roman Catholic Homes will accept Roman Catholic women only. In exceptional circumstances any one of these twelve Homes may afford a girl of a different religious persuasion shelter for a single night.

About one-third of the Homes have age-limits, and many of them also require a medical certificate before admission. Other conditions necessarily imposed refer to such matters as references, an agreed length of stay, sources whence applicants may be accepted, the exclusion of mental, " second-fall " or venereal cases, preference to local applicants, or restrictions made necessary by special work.

The age-limits apply chiefly to the Maternity Homes and Long-stay Homes. Apart from the Emergency Homes, where no age-limit is imposed, and also the Homes for young children, it can be said that the girls and women received must usually be between the ages of fourteen and thirty.

The women remain in the Homes for periods varying according to their needs and the exigencies of the work. At some Emergency Shelters where the demand for accommodation is very great the length of stay is necessarily limited to a few days. On the other hand there are casual Homes of this type whither individuals have returned nightly for as long a period as fifteen years.

At Maternity Homes it is found that better results are possible if an unmarried mother enters the Home some months before her baby is born and stays for a corresponding period afterwards; many Homes only admit applicants upon some such understanding. Girls cannot always afford to remain away from their work for so long a period, and this rule probably results in many girls deciding to make other arrangements. At the Long-stay Homes two years is generally considered to be the minimum period from which the best results can be anticipated from the training provided; this applies particularly to the Preventive Homes where the girls entering are often very young.

Charges

The charges payable by, or on behalf of, the girls entering the Homes are usually very low. Forty Homes are entirely free, and sixty-nine others make no charge to local applicants, or to those who cannot afford to pay. The charges for board and lodging are often under 10s. per week, and in some cases less than 5s. Other Homes range in their charges up to £1 and £2 per week, while four only exceed the latter figure. Some institutions ask for an entrance fee of from two to five guineas and make a small weekly charge, or none at all, thereafter.

The Maternity Homes are seldom able to charge less than 10s. per week, and they do not often ask more than £1, whether for the mother alone or with her baby. Sometimes a fee, usually two guineas, is asked to meet the expenses of the confinement at a lying-in hospital, or the £2 Maternity Benefit may be collected by the Home.

Certain Emergency Shelters, as has already been noted, charge by the day. At the Hostels the charge is often adjusted according to the amount the girl may be earning.

It seems to be a sound principle that girls making use of the Homes should be asked to make some contribution, small though it may be, towards the cost of the upkeep of the institution; this is desirable if for no other reason than that it is helpful to their self-respect.

Numbers Dealt With

The accommodation at the Homes is very fully utilized; indeed more is badly needed for certain types

of the work. At the date of the inquiry less than ten per cent. of the available accommodation of all kinds remained unused. At those Homes which showed a proportionately large amount of unused accommodation inquiry was made as to the reasons for this. In some cases it was due to lack of applications, implying that the Home is not sufficiently known, or for some reason is avoided by applicants; the restriction of admissions to girls of a particular type, or the fact that the management found smaller numbers to give better results, also accounted for a certain amount of wastage; financial difficulties seriously limited the work of some institutions, while others were hampered by the fact that girls were unable to pay their charges; certain necessary conditions of working, such as rapidly changing population, and the need for frequent disinfection of beds were in some cases responsible for beds remaining empty. These facts relate to the recent Survey; the conditions at the present time are undoubtedly very similar, and the need for the extension of certain accommodation is probably as great to-day as it was during 1922 and 1923.

Many different influences affect the number of applicants received by the Maternity Homes. Some unmarried mothers object to the idea of entering a Home. There may in some cases be sufficient reason for this prejudice; the writer is aware that certain Maternity Homes still exist which have not always been administered on the most attractive—or even tactful and sympathetic—lines, and such facts are sure to become known to some of the intending applicants. At the same time there is no doubt that such institutions are in a very small minority and that if the really excellent work of the remainder were more generally realized, this prejudice against the Homes as a body might be removed; the unmarried mother would then realize that at a Maternity Home she will have many advantages not procurable elsewhere, as

well as expert advice in dealing with the abnormal difficulties that surround her. The Unemployment Benefit and the £2 Maternity Benefit also assist girls to arrange their confinement independently of the Maternity Homes.

Another most serious factor affecting the utility of the Homes is the activity of certain adoption agencies. The advertisements of these societies and the facilities they offer have the effect of causing many girls to avoid the Maternity Homes, since they know that the policy of rescue workers is in the main strongly against the disposal of illegitimate children by adoption.

Some at least of these adoption agencies appear to call for close inquiry as regards their methods. The writer has met with indisputable evidence of such bodies—offering to relieve the parents of illegitimate children of all responsibility upon payment to the society of a, sometimes very inadequate, lump sum. This matter is dealt with more fully elsewhere.

Of the Emergency Shelters, seventeen alone during one year dealt with 144,406 separate applications for a night's lodging from women and girls, and gave shelter also to 233 babies. In the same period the Homes of all other types accommodated for varying periods a total of 6,762 girls and women and 2,541 babies.

Medical Provision at the Homes

As regards the medical arrangements provided at the Homes, that which is available for dealing with venereal disease has been referred to already, and the bearing of these diseases upon our problem will be more fully discussed in another place. Against ordinary infectious diseases the usual precautions are everywhere taken and every Home has available the

services of its own medical man, who very often makes no charge for his visits.

It may be remarked here that, while at most of the Homes a medical certificate is required before admission of an applicant, the precautions taken in some cases against the admission of girls infected with venereal disease do not appear to offer sufficient security. It is the habit of some matrons to rely upon their own observation to detect cases if no certificate is presented; this procedure may fulfil its purpose in most cases, but is scarcely so reliable as would be an examination by a qualified expert at a clinic or elsewhere.

Work Done in the Homes

It is obvious that in the case of girls of the type of those found in the Voluntary Homes the proverbial evil of " idle hands " needs particularly to be guarded against. The question as to how the girls employ their time is therefore of first importance. Almost one-third of the institutions display industrial activities of some kind, the most usual being laundry-work and needlework; subsidiary industries also include basket-making, raffia work, hose-knitting, cobbling, shirt-making, jam-making, matting and weaving. At one Home an experiment in glove-making was tried, but was not a commercial success; at another, Swedish silk-weaving looms were imported, but this attempt also failed, partly because the girls did not care for the work, and also because the market available for the output was largely artificially created and of a semi-charitable nature.

The laundries at some of the Homes are very large and excellently equipped; they often bring in a considerable profit on the year's working to assist the funds of the Home. The writer feels obliged to

confess that he has been quite unable to overcome an initial, and probably very unreasonable, prejudice against the employment of these girls on laundry-work as a commercial venture to assist the upkeep of the Home. Such arrangements are doubtless amply justifiable: there are girls who enjoy and take a pride in their work and develop into trained fine-laundry hands of the highest proficiency; there are also others who frankly loathe it.

It may be that in the mind of the writer there attaches still to this business of laundering too strong a flavour of the atmosphere which appears to have limited the scope of the penitentiary Homes of earlier days—an atmosphere which he has heard very aptly, if somewhat blasphemously, described as that of "wash and pray." It may be also that this prejudice is supported by a vision which returns to mind of a dimly-lighted, damp and echoing, soapy-smelling vault of a place visited one cold and drizzling January afternoon, and of a young woman listlessly engaged in the steamy twilight in ironing innumerable and various garments—a manifestly unhappy young woman who wept silently when the matron spoke to her.

It may be argued that these girls are no worse off than many thousands of women who willingly take up laundry-work as their trade, but it still appears to the writer that well-paid laundry-work, freely undertaken and combined with personal liberty is a very different proposition; that the anticipation of two to three years of hard and unpaid labour amongst soap-suds and steam in an institutional atmosphere is one to make the stoutest heart quail, a prospect calculated to blind the initiate to the advantages otherwise to be gained from a stay at the Home.

Needlework as an industry would appear in some ways as a more human and less monotonous employment, to offer greater scope for variation and individual

enterprise; it is possible, moreover, for a working-party to sit round a comfortable fire to do needlework. Needlework as an industry in the Voluntary Homes of London at present takes second place in importance. That it can be made a profitable pursuit is indicated by the fact that one very large Voluntary Agency, dealing with social work of many kinds, makes an annual profit of over £30,000 from the needlework industry at its Homes all over the country.

More varied industrial occupations than those at present adopted would seem to be possible and desirable, but the inauguration of these would need to be undertaken by experts on the subject; many unexpected difficulties are liable to confront uninformed efforts.

At those Homes where no industrial occupation is available the girls must necessarily be kept occupied upon other duties. At almost every Home they are expected to do at least a part of the housework. In the Maternity Homes, of course, the women, before confinement, are unable to do very much hard work, while afterwards their time is largely monopolized by the care of the babies; for this reason a larger staff is needed at Maternity Homes.

There are certainly some Homes where the occupants do not appear to be kept sufficiently employed, and where the domestic staff appears to be in excess of the needs of the Home. At one institution it was found that the staff exceeded in number the inmates normally accommodated; this was a most exceptional instance.

At most Homes the girls are found willing to assist in the work of the house, and sometimes anxious to learn how to cook, wait at table, or do other work that may be useful to them later on.

CHAPTER VI

Finances of Voluntary Homes—Specific needs—Sources of income — Expenditure — Comparative expenses — Standards—Changes in treatment.

ONE of the most continuously pressing and difficult problems connected with rescue and preventive work is that of finance, and this is nowhere more insistent than at the Voluntary Homes.

The matter needs to be looked at from several angles of view. It may be recalled that, of the twenty-three Homes closed down within the past few years, at least thirteen were obliged to cease work owing to lack of funds. At least six more are at the present moment in imminent danger of sharing the same fate, while no less than one-third of the remainder are in a decidedly insecure financial position. The latter comprise chiefly the very valuable Maternity and Long-stay Homes. Many of these are in debt, and they are all on the financial danger-line.

Only sixty of the Homes are found to be in a secure financial position, and unlikely for such reasons to be lost to the work.

It will be realized from these facts that the work is based on a not very secure practical foundation. The hopeful fact, which should also be indicated, is that this foundation has probably never yet been even reasonably secure during the whole history of the work —and yet the work carries on. This hope, however, cannot be held to justify an attitude of indifference to

the struggle which alone keeps this effort alive, and to the lack of support it receives from the general public. The public owes to the Voluntary Homes a debt of gratitude vastly greater than it knows, not only, as pointed out already, on account of the good work which is done, but also because of the incalculable evil prevented.

The work carries on at present, it is true—in spite of utterly inadequate financial support—and the balance is obtained by a monstrous and cruel overdraft upon the energy, self-sacrifice, and bodily health and happiness of an unconquerable army of devoted workers —an overdraft which no amount of belated munificence could ever wipe out. The need is instant—how urgent it is difficult to convey any idea. The public has a conscience in such matters; if the real facts were more widely known and certain long-lived misunderstandings removed, the Homes of London and elsewhere would receive their due share of the support which is at present withheld, or given to the forwarding of more advertised but less vital work.

Many of the Homes are in difficulties, but a distinction needs to be made between those comparatively few institutions which possess considerable invested funds, and are suffering from the reduced purchasing power of their income, and those, on the other hand, which have no invested resources and are either in debt, or in need of money urgently for some essential item of equipment or necessary development, or unable actually to see their way to pay the next quarter's rent or buy food for their charges.

It is certainly undesirable that the former should be forced to whittle away their capital in order to continue their work, or, alternatively, obliged to limit their usefulness and waste their accommodation by temporarily reducing their numbers, but the position of the latter is certainly more desperate and calls for any immediate aid which may be forthcoming.

The Homes rely for their funds to a very great extent upon voluntary donations, subscriptions and legacies. The money received as payments by, or on behalf of, the inmates, sometimes comprises a considerable proportion of the annual income; in other cases it is negligible.

Some Homes receive grants from public bodies. The Maternity Homes receive a substantial annual grant from the Ministry of Health, and the London County Council assists those approved institutions concerned with medical treatment. In certain cases Boards of Guardians, Police Courts and Borough Councils are also able to help to a lesser extent. Grants will sometimes be made by large charitable agencies.

It is sometimes suggested that the State should undertake the financial support of this work. State-aided enterprises are usually to some extent State-controlled. What the effect would be of introducing State-control into this work—the very essence of which is the free play of individual enterprise, enthusiasm and sacrifice—is a question which the advocates of State-control would probably be well advised to ponder very deeply. Whatever may be considered the duty or power of the State in this matter of early preventive work, in its widest possible sense, it is possibly no unfortunate thing that, as regards direct influence upon the rescue organizations, the regulations do not at present permit state or municipal funds to be made available for any of this work except in the case of the Maternity or Medical Homes aforementioned.

The Homes display considerable enterprise in raising funds by the organization of jumble sales, concerts, garden parties, theatrical entertainments or "pound days," when patrons are invited and expected to bring or send a gift of a pound of any useful household commodity for the replenishing of the

matron's store-room; the offer, as an alternative, of one pound sterling is not rejected.

The funds derived from industries have already been referred to; a few figures may have a certain interest in this connection. One large Home makes an annual profit of over £2,500 from its laundry industry, while several others clear approximately £2,000. Another large institution with similar equipment actually shows a loss on the year's working. The reason for this difference in the results lies probably in the combination of a number of rather indefinite causes, some at least of which could be eliminated.

Needlework brings in incomes up to a few hundred pounds per annum at several Homes. The funds raised by industrial efforts of other kinds are negligible.

On the expenditure side of the account the chief items are household maintenance, staff salaries, rent, rates and repairs. These all have to be met whether funds are coming in or not, and the fortitude displayed at some of the institutions in carrying on the work and admitting fresh applicants in the face of an accumulating debt can receive only commendation in view of the urgency of the work.

Apart from the general need for funds for normal maintenance, many Homes need money or gifts in kind for certain very definite purposes. A short account of these may help to give an insight into some of the everyday difficulties of the work. From at least twenty-five Homes rises the complaint that they are totally unable to deal with the volume of applications that pour in; these appeal for the means to extend their work. Others are anxious to bring again into use available accommodation which they have been obliged to withdraw. Some desire to establish subsidiary institutions, such as foster-mother Homes and Hostels, or holiday Homes, in order that the main Home may be kept clear for its own proper functions.

The premises occupied by some of the foundations are most unsuited to the work, in some cases even unhealthy, and a change is urgently desired. Others again are hampered in their usefulness by their inability to employ outside workers, to do that street work which the matron, whose place is within the Home, should not be obliged to attempt.

Decorations, repairs, alterations and additional equipment are very obviously needed in some Homes, both to contribute a more cheerful atmosphere and increase the efficiency of the Home.

Several houses have not even a proper bath. Two have been required by the authorities to build a fire escape, which is a very expensive item, while many need such things as clothes, boots, telephone, pianos, etc. Others are handicapped by inability to afford training fees for the girls or necessary personal help when in difficulties, outfits for girls entering domestic service, better after-care arrangements, or more adequate salaries to their own staff.

It is obvious that, apart from the question as to the need for the establishment of new Homes, the effectiveness of those at present existing could be very materially increased if they were in receipt of more general support.

An attempt has been made to arrive at an average figure for the normal annual cost of each bed maintained at Homes of different types. These figures can be regarded as approximate only owing to the unequal effect of situation, affecting rent and rates, and to the fact that some Homes pay no rent at all. The size of the Home will also materially affect the economy with which it can be administered.

Maternity Homes are the most expensive to maintain; the normal figure for these appears to be between £80 and £115 per annum for each bed, the higher figure applying to those where the confinements take place on the premises. Other Homes of all types

except Emergency Shelters give a fairly level figure between £70 and £85. The large Emergency Homes show an average annual expenditure of about £45 for each occupied bed.

Although these figures are not very reliable, a comparison between the average and maximum figures obtained, one of which approaches £250, has proved a useful criterion indicating that a certain very small number of institutions are administered with some extravagance. It may be added that such Homes were found, not, as might have been expected, among those providing more comfort for their charges or having superior equipment, but among those which were adjudged to be decidedly unsatisfactory upon other grounds also.

The vast majority of Homes are administered with the very greatest regard to economy.

Standards

Regarding the general standard of efficiency of the Homes a great deal might be written. The 151 Homes of various types are administered by individuals or committees who, animated as they are by a common spirit of service, view the problem from very different angles. Thus it is not surprising that wide differences should be discernible in the methods of treatment adopted and the results achieved. Such inequalities are far more often to be regarded as the result of material limitations than of deficiencies in the human element.

The standard of the Voluntary Homes in London is, on the whole, a very high one, and their treatment of the problem is undoubtedly on the right lines. It is true that here and there may be found Homes that call for severe criticism, whether on the grounds of slackness, slovenliness, extravagance or wrong and

old-fashioned methods. There are at most seven which can be described as of doubtful utility; three of these are definitely undesirable, and it would be a gain to the work in general if they could be closed down and the energy and money they at present absorb applied to more constructive work.

Apart from the actual inferiority of this very small proportion of the Homes themselves, there are one or two isolated and comparatively unimportant aspects of the work which the writer—in common, let it be said, with very many of the more experienced workers and organizers—considers highly undesirable. For obvious reasons it would only be possible to particularize in a book of this kind at the expense of freedom of expression. No indication may, therefore, be given as to the agencies referred to, nor indeed could their nomination be justified on any score of usefulness. It is merely stated, therefore, in the interests of impartial truth that, as regards a certain few not very important Homes, the names of which do not appear anywhere in these pages, the administration is most expensive in proportion to the work accomplished; that these Homes are not only doing work of a kind entirely different from that which they profess to undertake, but are also doing it very badly; while their administrators appear to be encased in an impenetrable armour of self-satisfaction and self-complacency which pointed but tactful criticism has so far entirely failed to dislodge.

It seems probable that the efforts now being made to correlate the work in the London Area will in due course evaluate the work of such Homes and present it in its true light before the general fellowship of workers.

This matter is only mentioned here as an instance and warning as to how far astray action upon preconceived opinions, unaccompanied by critical inquiry, may lead the most altruistic effort. The

writer also wishes to state that, although he could find nothing but humble admiration and praise for most of the activities to which he was introduced, he was not for that reason blinded to any glaring deficiencies which may have become evident. Moreover, unsatisfactory Homes tend to convey to the outside public a false idea of the quality of rescue work in general; considerations of common fairness to the best Homes and to the work at large therefore demand that when such conditions are found they should be recorded. It is obvious that, even in a struggle on such a high plane as that which we are considering, the armour cannot all be of the brightest, and he does not see that any useful purpose will be served by covering up the dull spots. Indeed, in such an action, the discriminating reader would at once suspect a eulogistic bias, whereas the chief aim of the present account of the rescue and preventive effort in London is to approach as nearly as possible to the plain truth, and to allow that to stand as a sufficient testimonial to the work which is being done.

The allotting of distinctive uniforms, usually of an unattractive nature, to girls in Rescue Homes is probably a survival of more ancient custom, which, happily, is not generally adopted to-day. It appears as undesirable as making a distinction of treatment of girls of different social status in the same Home. This was done for some years in one Home, and was found to be productive of much ill-feeling, and has lately been discontinued. Again, at one institution, which deals with girls of immoral type as well as with others, it was found that a rather sordid type of uniform had been allotted to the former, while the others, who incidentally were mainly girls removed from prison, convicted of miscellaneous offences, were permitted to wear an ordinary black dress. The latter were also expected to take precedence over the rescue cases in various ways—presumably on the

assumption that offences against the moral code automatically place a girl in a lower caste than, for example, an infringement of the law of property. It is difficult to imagine a regulation less calculated to assist in the reclamation of the branded ones or more damaging to their self-respect.

It is necessary to use considerable imagination in judging the standard of material comfort observable in the Homes themselves, bearing in mind the fact that the occupants are likely to regard the amenities provided from a standpoint very different from that of the observer. For example, one child was alleged to have described as " Paradise " an institution which would be judged, by normal standards, to be a very dingy and depressing place indeed.

The present shortage of provision of this kind in London makes an imperfect Home far more desirable than no Home at all, and such a Home will not necessarily produce the anticipated depressing and devitalizing effect upon a girl who has all her life known very much worse conditions—such, for instance, as those outlined in our first chapter. Therefore, only those Homes which were found to exhibit some pronounced undesirable characteristic have been referred to here as bad Homes.

There can be no doubt that there has been a far-reaching change for the better during recent years. It is fairly generally realized that the old order has changed and that the new generation assumes a right to a far greater degree of freedom and independence, both of thought and action, than did its forbears. For this reason the matrons and superintendents have largely—but not yet altogether—abandoned the policy of the locked front door, the enforced silence and the rigid penal discipline. They realize that the new generation will have none of these things; that they will at once kick over the traces and utterly refuse to remain in an institution where the regulations are

severe or the atmosphere cheerless. They realize, too, the natural corollary of all this—that the first essential for success is to make the Home as attractive as possible and as *homelike* in atmosphere; that force of example and a hopeful concentration upon drawing out the latent good in their charges are far more powerful agents for regeneration than continual suppression and insistence upon the wickedness of past transgressions.

Where all possible liberty consistent with the necessary precautions of the work is permitted to the girls, and reliance upon a sense of honour and a realization of the obligatory nature of a promise is substituted for the doubtful security of bolts and bars, it is found that, not only is the atmosphere of an institution a happier and a healthier one, but the results achieved also are immeasurably enhanced.

When those responsible for religious teaching also move with the times and realize generally—as they already do here and there—that the old rigid and didactic methods must inevitably go the way of the bolts and bars, giving place to wider interpretations and a code more closely correlated to the facts and difficulties of everyday life, then a real forward movement will be in progress on the spiritual side both in the Homes and outside them.

CHAPTER VII

Ages of women and girls dealt with—Numbers at various ages — Critical ages — Very young girls — Types: innocent girls, first offenders, prostitutes, unmarried mothers, mentally afflicted.

UP to this point we have considered chiefly the Voluntary Homes and Agencies, their varying characteristics and methods of working. We will now turn to a more intimate view of the girls and women with whom they deal—those already caught in the main stream but arrested on their journey towards the lip of the maelstrom.

An important aspect of the whole problem of rescue work is connected with the ages of the girls who have need to enter the Homes. If a careful analysis of ages should be found to give reliable evidence that a moral lapse is more likely to occur during any particular age-period or periods, such evidence may be found to throw some light upon the question of causative agents, and possibly also to suggest useful preventive precautions that might be taken.

Unfortunately it has not been possible to glean full information regarding the ages of those utilizing the Homes, since records of this kind are not kept at every institution. Information is actually available concerning a total number of 3,437 girls and women resident at Homes of all types during one period of twelve months; this should give a sufficiently representative indication for our purpose. It must be remarked, however, that the ages of applicants

at Homes of diverse types naturally show very considerable variation.

It is better to exclude the Emergency Homes from any consideration of this matter of ages, since no records of this kind are kept at the large Common Lodging Houses and the figures taken from other Emergency Homes cannot therefore be representative. There is undoubtedly a high percentage of older women to be found in these shelters.

After careful consideration five age-periods were taken as the basis of the investigation. These were: Under nineteen years; nineteen to twenty-two; twenty-two to twenty-five; twenty-five to thirty; over thirty years. More than one-third of the whole number of girls here considered were under nineteen years of age and almost two-thirds were under twenty-two. This applies to a general average embracing all Homes except the Emergency Homes. Looking at the Maternity Homes separately we find a difference. Here there are by far the greater number between nineteen and twenty-two, while the other age-periods show fairly even numbers, with a very decided drop after the age of thirty. The figures for those Homes dealing with venereal disease exhibit an almost exact parallel to those for the Maternity Homes. More than three-quarters of the girls resident at the Long-stay and Preventive Homes were, as might be expected, under nineteen years of age. The figures for Homes of other types do not show any features of notable interest.

The only conclusion which may justifiably be drawn from the above is the perhaps obvious one that the most dangerous age-period probably lies—varying with the individual—between the age of rather less than nineteen and about twenty-two. This, of course, coincides broadly with a period of full physiological development and—again broadly speaking—falls short of the age of full acquisition of those mental

faculties whose function it is to control too boisterous physiological tendencies and inhibit dangerous impulses.

The development of the various phases in man or woman may be set down in order as—physical body, separate vitality, the emotional reproductive faculty, responsible individuality; they are accompanied by their respective attributes of—unconsciousness, consciousness, self-consciousness, responsibility or "conscience" in the order given, and they normally depart in the reverse order, thus accounting, among other things, for the phenomenon commonly known as "second childhood" as well as certain other irresponsible phases of old age which to some extent affect our problem. During development they to some extent overlap the one with the other; for example, the reproductive and emotional instinct is not normally fully present prior to the arrival of at least some degree of the controlling mentality, but the latter is often somewhat retarded—just as the former may be somewhat advanced—and in any case has not yet assumed its full force at a stage when the sex-instinct is completely developed. These facts give the psychological reason why the period of puberty is liable to prove an uncontrolled and dangerous age.

In more colloquial language one might say that the boy or girl is "growing up" but has not yet "learned sense." This for the majority of people is a sufficient statement of the position, but the root of the matter lies in reality far deeper. It is possible, without descending, as the modern fashion is, into the bewildering by-paths of psycho-analysis, to obtain a concise elementary conception of the process of unfoldment of the emotional and mental faculties and this will help us both to prepare against the dangers latent in normal development, and to understand far more clearly, and make due allowances for,

certain abnormal manifestations which we shall encounter.

It is hoped that an examination of this absorbing subject at a later stage (Chapter XIV) will lead us still further along the path of understanding; it is touched upon here because of its intimate connection with the question of perilous age-periods.

Another, and more obvious, reason why the ages referred to must be regarded as critical is that in very many cases girls—and youths also—at about this time become partially or wholly emancipated from parental control and commence to earn their own living amongst conditions of greater liberty. This factor, coinciding with those referred to above, tends to render more easy the indulgence of any undesirable inclinations.

There is among rescue workers an opinion, which appears to be well founded, that the girls entering the Homes are on the whole younger than those received before the war. The average age of girls dealt with by the Women Police during 1921 was about twenty-one.

A significant feature is the number of very young children who form a part of the problem. These are found both at the Homes dealing with venereal disease and at the Maternity Homes; two of the latter now reserve their accommodation entirely for very young unmarried mothers.

It is probable that, if the facts concerning these very young girls were more widely known, and the magnitude of the evil recognized by the general public, there would be a strong movement towards reform and, incidentally, a demand also for the more drastic punishment of persons found guilty of offences against children.

It is certainly a difficult matter to obtain complete information regarding the ages of the girls and women at the Homes, but it is found to be almost impossible to gain a reliable indication as to the proportions in

which the different types are represented. Age is, after all, a definite thing, and although false ages may be stated in a few cases, the general average is not likely for this reason to be falsified.

Types

It is found that, when an attempt is made to ascertain a girl's character and past history, a crop of falsehoods is very often the first fruits of inquiry. The true facts are more likely to come to light in due course when the girl has been in the Home for some time, and the astute matron therefore usually relies more upon her own quiet observation and judgment than upon the question direct.

It is important for the rescue worker to know as early as possible whether the applicant is an innocent girl exposed to moral danger, a girl who has done wrong but is not a prostitute, or an occasional or habitual prostitute. Research has, therefore, been undertaken regarding the relative prevalence of these three types at the Homes. It may be assumed that those at the Preventive Homes are all of the first type, while those at the Maternity Homes are nearly all of the second, very few prostitutes allowing themselves to become pregnant. The great Emergency Homes again give us no information on the question of types since such information is here unobtainable.

A considerable amount of the incidental emergency accommodation provided by Homes of other types is made use of by unmarried women, pregnant or with babies. Since some Homes exclude this type of applicant there can be no doubt that there is a need either for more accommodation of this kind or for a more effective organization of that already existing. It is difficult to imagine a more pitiable plight for a young woman than that of being discharged from a

hospital or infirmary, or arriving in London with her illegitimate baby, without friends, and not knowing where to find shelter for herself or her child. She may appeal to the Police or to others and receive well-meant but often inaccurate advice and information, but in the present state of the provision in London it is exceedingly likely that she will pursue many false trails and walk the streets for hours before she is finally admitted. Her position will not be rendered any the less difficult if it should happen that she has been discharged on the tenth day after confinement, which is the rule enforced at some of the lying-in institutions.

At those Long-stay Homes where the work is not confined to prevention, girls and women of the second type mentioned above—immoral but not prostitutes—are largely represented, and here, of course, true rescue work of a very valuable kind is carried out with these more hopeful cases during their long period of observation and training; a small number of reclaimed prostitutes is also found at these Homes. At the residential Hostels there are found more of the innocent girls than those needing reclamation. This would at first seem a little difficult to understand, since there are certainly large numbers of reclaimed girls earning low wages who would find this inexpensive Hostel accommodation of the greatest assistance in their difficult struggle against temptation. The explanation probably lies in the fact that, with the exception of the large Emergency Hostels, which are not attractive as a permanent residence, there is hardly any such accommodation available for respectable girls earning wages in any of the more central parts of London. (There are, of course, many Hostels of more expensive type for respectable girls and women, but these are not being considered here.)

A great deal of the preventive work carried out is concerned with girls who may not have exhibited any

immoral sex-tendencies at all. They may be girls received—sometimes on probation or remand—from Police Courts or Prisons, and convicted of various offences; some are girls whose parents have been unable to keep them under control and have sent them into a Home for disciplinary training. Others have been removed from sordid or dangerous surroundings or from the influence of undesirable parents.

Work upon human material of this kind is obviously of the very greatest value in the prevention of an indeterminate quantity of future evil.

Again, some inexperienced, ignorant, or merely foolish and adventurous girls, are removed from the dangers of street-loitering and warned by the matrons of Emergency Shelters or Short-stay Homes as to the risks they are running; they are often assisted also in whatever practical way may be necessary. Among these are often found country girls who have migrated to London under a false impression as to the conditions, of employment or otherwise, that they would meet there; others have been led by bad companions, or deceived by the reading of cheap, sensational fiction or by misleading film stories. Such girls are often surprised and alarmed when their very real dangers are revealed to them, and easily persuaded to return home.

Among the second type considered—those who have done wrong but are not prostitutes—there are very many who appear to have an ingrained tendency towards moral laxity. There is strong evidence that this is largely to be accounted for on the score of mental instability, manifesting in various forms and degrees of severity; this question is more fully dealt with elsewhere. Girls and women of this second type are often found to be those of a highly emotional, but by no means vicious, nature who have yielded to temptation upon a sudden impulse, while under the influence of stimulants, or have been betrayed by a

man under promise of marriage. Others have, from their earliest years, been forced to live in surroundings where immorality is condoned, or where conditions of overcrowding render personal privacy almost an unknown luxury and purity in girl or boy difficult to retain.

Again, there are some who attribute their downfall to having formed too easy friendships with men of low moral standard. Some of these are girls with few friends in London, who find themselves oppressed by an intolerable sense of loneliness when they return to their lodgings after the day's work. This drives them to seek companionship and distraction in undesirable ways.

A small proportion, presumably those in whom the maternal instinct is abnormally strong, assert that the desire to have a child is responsible for their action. Many experienced rescue workers appear to doubt the *bona fides* of girls who give this as a reason, suggesting that it is put forward merely as a plausible justification. It is probable that there are exceedingly few, if any, girls who feel the maternal instinct so powerfully that, estimating the chances of marriage as small, they would deliberately put themselves in the way of becoming mothers of illegitimate children, regardless of the stigma attaching to their action and all the difficulties and responsibilities involved. Nevertheless, from evidence of various kinds, the writer is convinced that the maternal instinct does in some cases play a very large, even predominant part, although its influence may at the time be partially or wholly subliminal, and only recognized later as a factor weakening inhibition. Experience also shows that some girls, when their baby arrives, are most amenable in their conduct, very happy, and usually show no further tendency towards immorality: they have received that which they had subconsciously greatly desired.

It is obvious that, with the exception of those who may be mentally unstable, most of the girls and women included in the above classification are quite normal and non-vicious members of the community who, through some unfortunate incident or combination of circumstances, have lapsed from the generally accepted way of moral rectitude. They are often more to be regarded as unfortunate than unprincipled, more sinned against—either by an individual or by society as a whole—than sinning.

It is equally obvious that they cannot in these enlightened days be regarded, as some sanctimonious people would still wish to regard them, as a class apart—of a distinctly lower caste than ordinary people. This is realized with added force when we remember that the ranks of the said "ordinary people" in London certainly include many times the number of individuals whose moral tendencies and actions differ only from those of the type of girl here considered in the single detail that the former happen to avoid discovery.

Fortunately the general trend of rescue work to-day is towards a broad and human outlook and sympathetic treatment; the few remaining strongholds of the old-fashioned school are being surrounded, and will not long survive.

The third type of woman—the prostitute—we have already considered from one point of view. She is met with comparatively infrequently among the true Rescue Homes, but when she does appear, another aspect of her character and life is revealed. Prostitutes do frequently enter the Short-stay and Emergency Homes; it is usually without any intention of remaining as candidates for reclamation; they more often apply in bad weather, late at night, when they have been unsuccessful in plying their trade, and usually depart the following morning.

Matrons of the Short-stay Homes have, therefore,

to exercise special vigilance over the residents, since one woman of this kind, drifting in from the underworld of the streets, can, by her talk and unregenerate advice, adversely influence and unsettle less experienced girls, and in a very short time undo much of the good which has been achieved.

A very few prostitutes who become pregnant, and an equally small number of those suffering from venereal disease who are forced to take advantage of the help offered, are suitably cared for in the Homes, and often influenced to take up an honest calling. Occasionally a prostitute will enter a Rescue Home, whether of her own free will or after continuous persuasion by a worker, with the definite intention of changing her way of life. These women, who in some cases may have spent as much as ten years of their lives on the streets, often do exceedingly well; a number of them are happily married in due course and afterwards live useful and virtuous lives.

The fact that a woman often becomes a prostitute under pressure of circumstances and in spite of a realization of the degradation of her calling, is instanced by the efforts that these women will sometimes make to prevent a young girl from going astray. It is not an unknown thing for a prostitute to approach a rescue worker, who, professionally at least, can scarcely be regarded by her as a friend, and ask her to use her influence upon a young acquaintance who is following an irregular life. Similarly, they will sometimes confide in the Police. The cynic might be inclined to suggest that fear of competition supplies sufficient motive for such action, but those who are most closely in touch with the circumstances know that the motive is altruistic.

On the other hand there is no doubt that hardened prostitutes often like to make a friend of a more innocent girl and to initiate her into their own way of living. Older women, too, very often persuade young

girls to adopt the immoral life and train them in its technique.

It is reported that prostitutes in exceptional cases earn as much as fifteen pounds to twenty-five pounds per week; the takings for an individual act of immorality usually vary, according to the district and the type of woman concerned, from half-a-crown to five pounds or more. More than one instance has been known of a prostitute maintaining her son or daughter at a good public school.

An interesting sidelight upon the recognized castes existing within this trade of prostitution is given in the words of one of themselves who admitted that she was a "professional." She classed her fellow unfortunates as follows: "The upper class—those who work in Society; the middle class—the ordinary prostitute; the lower class—the dirty, rotten little street-girl who ought to be burnt."

The unmarried mothers received at the Voluntary Homes are—again with the exception of those who may be judged to be in some degree mental cases—almost all of the type described above as quite ordinary members of society who are more unfortunate than unprincipled. From the rescue worker's point of view they are usually very hopeful cases to deal with. The bearing of an illegitimate child brings home to them in the most forcible manner possible the seriousness of their action, and usually leaves them in a very impressionable state of mind, ready to respond to the helpful influences of the Home.

The arrival of the baby is also observed to have a valuable effect upon the character of the mother. At first it may not in every case be welcomed, but usually in a very short time the maternal instinct prevails, and many a girl who, before the birth of her child, was of an irresponsible nature, steadies down and becomes a devoted mother, sacrificing her own small luxuries and comforts for the good of the child. This

well-established good effect exercised by the baby upon the character of the young unmarried mother is perhaps the strongest possible argument in favour of the methods adopted at those Homes where mother and child remain together for a considerable time—several months at least—after the arrival of the baby. It is also an equally strong argument against the policy of adoption, which removes the mother at an early stage from contact with her child and relieves her of all sense of responsibility also; the result of this arrangement upon a certain type is not uncommonly that she has another illegitimate child forthwith.

It must be remembered that many of these girls who enter the Maternity Homes in a pregnant condition are girls who are earning their own living, and one of the outstanding difficulties of the work is that of persuading the girls to leave their occupations in good time before their confinement, and to remain away for a reasonable period afterwards. Although they may be willing to meet the matron's wishes in this respect they are often unable to afford the serious loss of wages involved. This consideration also undoubtedly partly accounts for the fact noted above that many girls make their own arrangements when they are able to do so, in order that they may avoid what they regard as a waste of time spent at the Homes.

There are undoubtedly individuals who are most successfully treated as "outside cases" if the rescue worker is able to keep very closely in touch with them, but this is an undesirable arrangement with any but girls of exceptional type or circumstances. The general policy of the Homes is to retain those who enter for as long a period as they need help or advice, or for as long as it is judged that the influence of the Home, and the training given, will prove beneficial.

Those unmarried mothers who apply to the

Voluntary Homes for help in their trouble are, of course, only a proportion of the total number of women in all grades of society who find themselves in similar plight. In the case of women of means and education private arrangements are usually made. There is nothing to meet their need to be found at the Maternity Homes. Some go abroad for their confinement; others assume a wedding-ring and enter a Maternity Nursing Home, allowing it to be understood that they have a husband abroad. The babies are usually adopted.

Even among the class of girls we are chiefly considering, many, as we have seen, avoid the voluntary institutions altogether and have their confinements in their own homes, at the homes of their friends, or in maternity hospitals. These thus forfeit the benefit of any moral influence which the Voluntary Homes might bring to bear.

Mental Disability

We have considered above in some detail the various types of the girls and women found in the Voluntary Homes so far as it is possible to classify them according to age, character, experience of life and ease or otherwise of reclamation. There is also, unfortunately, an attribute of these women which undoubtedly embraces a very considerable proportion of individuals of all ages and types—that of mental instability or abnormality. Special establishments are, of course, in existence for the accommodation of those who are " certifiable " cases of mental defect or insanity; apart from these there is a very large number of uncertifiable or " border-line " cases.

In the opinion of the writer the individuals so afflicted should be regarded as an entirely separate and distinct type or class, and where the disability is

present in any marked, but again not certifiable, degree, an effort should be made to provide special treatment or control. It is only right to state here that this opinion is not supported by certain well-qualified experts who for years have been in the closest possible touch with medical, social and public-health aspects of the problem. On the other hand there are others of equal experience who will probably agree with the views herein expressed—and such are more particularly to be found amongst those dealing directly with the girls and women, either in the Homes themselves or at certain of the central distributing offices of the larger agencies. This appears to be one of those very difficult questions upon which experts are unable to find a basis of agreement. It is suggested that this failure may be due in the first place to the lack of a concrete definition and limitation of the main term involved, secondly to a loose, popular interpretation of the terms which are actually employed, and the fact that the problem is probably more one of degree than of kind; thirdly to unscientific methods of study of the facts and report upon the results on the part of those workers who are most closely in touch with the afflicted individuals, but are naturally not necessarily alienists or trained observers, and are, moreover, very much occupied with pressing duties.

The writer, having visited a great number of the Voluntary Homes in London, talked with the superintendents and matrons, and observed the inmates, is entirely convinced that the attribute, which he would prefer merely to describe as "mental abnormality," is a most potent and widespread factor affecting the lives of those who are found in the Homes, and increasing to a very great degree the difficulties of rescue work. This conclusion has been arrived at as the result of observation and the emphatic and almost universal—if not always concisely expressed—testi-

mony of those most closely in touch with the girls and women concerned. It is also supported *a priori* by the known close inter-relation and inter-action between the two most important creative functions in the human being—those of the sexual organs and the brain.

And the existence of this relation is established, not merely by the patient researches and re-discoveries of the comparatively youthful, and rather over-confident, medical science of the present era but, as we shall hope to show in a later chapter, by fundamental facts of life and evolution, and the teachings of ancient wisdom.

Let the reader, who may feel sceptical of the inter-relation of the human creative organs asserted above, admit the suggestion provisionally, as a possibility. If he will do this he will agree that it would come, not as a surprise, but as a thing to be expected, in a community such as that of the unfortunate women in the Voluntary Homes, a great number of whom display as a leading emotional characteristic an undue emphasis and unwholesome insistence of the sex-function, that that other part of the creative organization—that instrument of the "divine spark" in humanity—the brain—should similarly be found in some way abnormal.

It is not suggested that either abnormality is the cause of the other; both may be collateral effects of a more deep-seated cause; this also will be considered at a later stage, among other theoretical suggestions, the facts as encountered being presented here.

Those who deny that mental abnormality is a serious factor accompanying moral laxity most usually advance the following argument:

"We are none of us quite sane upon all points and at all times; the world would be a very dull place if we were. Also, sanity itself is a thing which it is impossible exactly to define; it is relative to a code of behaviour based on the average conduct of the majority

of people under given conditions. The girls and women at these Homes may be a little eccentric in some ways, but they are not necessarily 'mental'; you will find as much individual eccentricity in almost any group of apparently normal individuals, in a school or a club, for example."

This is at first sight a plausible statement of the position. Its weakness lies in the fact that even assuming—what is not for a moment admitted by the writer—that the mental abnormality or eccentricity found amongst the inmates of the Homes differs no whit in *kind* from that observable by the man in the street amongst his friends or acquaintances, the difference in *extent* is very marked indeed. Of one hundred individuals normally encountered, five or ten, at a high estimate, may perhaps be classed as mildly eccentric in one way or another. At the Voluntary Homes the percentage so describable is very much higher indeed, and the affliction is often by no means mild; this surely indicates that the Homes, by the very nature of their work, have inevitably sifted into their widespread network chiefly those who are by nature more or less mentally abnormal and *for that very reason find themselves in moral difficulties.*

The facts that follow at least go to confirm this supposition, and to support the suggestion that some very special provision is needed for the treatment of the large class of those girls and women who are mentally abnormal.

At each of the Homes visited during the Survey, inquiry was made as to any tendencies of this kind observed in the girls and the estimated extent of such abnormalities. In very many cases the information was volunteered at an early stage in the conversation, being regarded as indispensable to any discussion of the subject. In a very large proportion of the Homes it was reported that a high percentage of the girls dealt with were found to be suffering from some form

of mental disability, variously described as "queer," "wanting," "lacking in control," "having a kink somewhere," "an ungovernable temper," "of low mentality."

In some cases it was suggested that such women who came to the Homes represented the failures in their particular mode of life—those whose natural mental capacity was not sufficient to enable them either to support themselves honestly or avoid the pitfalls of an irregular life.

Estimates of percentages in regard to these matters are apt to be dangerously misleading, and no reliable statistics can be compiled therefrom. A rough idea as to the opinion of workers generally can, however, be obtained from the fact that, where estimates were offered, the percentage judged to be mentally abnormal was never below 40 per cent., usually between 50 per cent. and 60 per cent., while more than a few estimates ran as high as 90 per cent.

It should be remembered that this statement refers to those girls and women who were actually rescue cases, or those in whom undesirable moral tendencies had been revealed; it is not concerned with the bulk of the young preventive cases on the one hand, or with definitely certifiable cases of mental deficiency on the other.

Such evidence seems to leave little room for doubt that the women at the Rescue Homes, as a class, exhibit an unduly high proportion of mental abnormality of a degree which cannot be adequately described merely as "eccentricity." Whether it be permissible therefrom to deduce that a definite connection exists between mental abnormality and moral instability is a controversial question which may for the present be left open.

The really important matter is that it should be realized that such abnormality or deficiency does exist to an alarming extent, acting as a potent force to

hamper or counteract the efforts of workers, and that no effective scheme has as yet been devised, or provision made, for the best treatment of the individuals so afflicted. The proportion of such cases passing through the Homes is a matter for grave concern. The reclamation of a normally intelligent girl who has been given to wrongdoing is often a difficult matter enough, requiring prolonged effort by exhortation, argument, and the force of example on the part of the worker. If the girl be but half-witted, or less, it is obvious that much of the lesson will miss its mark, or be forgotten as soon as learned, or driven easily from remembrance as soon as the girl leaves the Home and encounters again the distractions and temptations of the outside world.

And this is what actually happens. For example, a girl of this type, who has had an illegitimate baby, may be dull and stupid and intractable while in the Home, or she may be docile and easily led by the influence of the moment. In either case it is often impossible to make any lasting impression upon her character. The girl leaves the Home, either mentally neutral to its influences or displaying an evanescent enthusiasm and desire to run straight in the future—and comes again in due course to this Home or another with the same trouble upon her. She is intrinsically lacking in the power of inhibition, dominated by the desire of the moment; she is utterly unable and unsuited to manage the conduct of her own life in a world where the selection of the right or wrong path lies within the discretion of the individual.

There is a large number of girls and women of this type—both maternity and other cases—who are in this manner playing " fast and loose " with the help offered them, gaining little benefit themselves, and wasting rescue effort which might be directed into more fertile channels. Their affliction is not grave enough to justify their being certified under any

mental category which allows of their detention or control, nor, for other reasons, is it desirable that they should be detained in institutions for the mentally afflicted. They constitute a very grave hindrance to the progress of the work and their right treatment is a most elusive and difficult problem of the first importance.

This problem, indeed, would seem to be one of the most urgent that demand attention from any official or semi-official body interested in the whole question of rescue work. It is suggested that a solution could possibly be found in the provision of self-supporting training and industrial establishments, preferably situated in the country, or farm colonies, managed somewhat on the lines of industrial schools, without the least suggestion of a mental hospital, and permitting all reasonable liberty to the inmates. Such establishments would need to be managed by those qualified to cope with the special problems that would arise, both from the peculiar mental condition of the girls, and the difficulty of making an economic success of an undertaking employing workers of limited efficiency.

The need is indicated for a painstaking inquiry, both as to the extent and real nature of the alleged mental abnormality prevailing, and a careful exploration of the possible methods of dealing satisfactorily and permanently with these very difficult cases.

CHAPTER VIII

Occupations of inmates—Domestic servants—Origins—Proportion of London girls, country girls, foreign girls—Immediate sources.

APART from the various types into which these girls and women can be classified, it will be of interest to the inquiring reader to learn from what occupations, and what levels of society they are chiefly drawn; also to discover whence those girls in the London institutions originate, and through what channels they reach the Homes.

With regard to occupations, there can be no doubt whatever that the vast majority of the girls in the Rescue Homes come from, and return to, domestic service. There is also an appreciable proportion of factory workers, waitresses, shop assistants, clerks and business girls. There are comparatively few of the professional classes, but some actresses, nurses and others are found. Many have no occupation.

At the Preventive Homes most of the girls received are too young to have had any occupation; those at the rescue institutions described as of no occupation are either prostitutes—a very small number—or girls who have been living at home with their parents.

The great preponderance of the domestic servant class is a fact which calls for closer examination, in order that its true significance may be ascertained. A number of diverse influences undoubtedly operate and swell the numbers classified under this heading. The first factor that suggests itself is obviously the very

great number of girls and women employed in domestic service in London. The description of domestic servant also is made to include girls and women of economic status varying from that of well-paid cooks and parlour-maids in the houses of the well-to-do to that of unfortunate " general " drudges in the lowest class of boarding-house. Great discrimination is therefore necessary in making deductions regarding the economic or other factors affecting this very diverse class.

It is probable that many girls of poor ability and low economic value, who have held very few positions, and those only for a short time, girls who may even have been on the streets at times, will describe themselves when questioned as domestic servants.

The above two considerations tend to militate against the superficial conclusion that the larger number of domestic servants in the Homes indicates that girls in this occupation are morally more lax than others, or more subjected to temptation. They suggest that the facts may be accounted for on the score of numbers or terminology. On the other hand there undoubtedly are factors bearing upon domestic service which point towards special difficulties and dangers connected with this work.

Many of the girls have no homes of their own, or are far removed from them; some find the work exceedingly monotonous. The living conditions in some private houses are unsatisfactory and the temptations and opportunities for wrongdoing often greatly accentuated; this applies with added force also to the conditions in some of the less reputable hotels and boarding-houses.

It is impossible, therefore, to offer, without further inquiry, a reliable explanation of the high figures obtained for this occupation. A more detailed research would perhaps bring to light interesting and important

facts, but it would prove an exceedingly difficult task, and it is unlikely that the results obtained would justify the time and effort expended. The important thing seems to be that no hasty or ill-judged conclusion should at this stage be drawn from the rather striking, but not necessarily very significant figures available.

In occupations other than domestic service the conditions are undoubtedly sometimes most unsatisfactory. This applies particularly to the conditions of employment of many waitresses in the more popular, as well as the less pretentious, restaurants and tea-shops. In these establishments the wages paid are often insufficient to cover the bare cost of living in even the most humble lodgings. They certainly leave no margin for the provision of reasonable small luxuries or necessary relaxation. Girls are largely dependent upon a fortuitous harvest of gratuities for the augmentation of their meagre wages. If this fails they are almost driven to resort to illegitimate means of making money or of securing some excitement and relaxation to relieve the monotony of their existence. It has been maintained by those interested that the amount that waitresses receive weekly in gratuities is by no means uncertain, that a girl who is paid a wage of 7s. to 10s. 6d. easily makes this up to 30s. or £2 in tips. Even if this be true—and apart from the iniquity of a system under which the generously disposed among the public pay, in effect, for the attendance available for all—it is obviously undesirable that so high a percentage of a girl's wages should be dependent upon the smooth working of the law of averages, and that, in the event of a temporary hiatus in that law, her employers should be able to disclaim all liability beyond the uncertain pittance provided. A good working plan is the pooling of all money taken in gratuities to be shared out among the staff at the end of the week, it being agreed that if

there be any deficit below a certain amount, it shall be made good by the management.

Business girls who work in offices as typists or clerks seem usually to be more generously treated, but those employed as assistants in the large business houses and stores are again in many cases very ungenerously paid.

The whole question of employment conditions is a wide one; there is no doubt that the wages paid in many trades are insufficient, and the temptation to earn money or its equivalent by immoral practices is, therefore, aggravated; the opportunity also in certain employments is continually presented.

This is a subject very intimately connected with our problem—one of the main currents which may be set either towards the maelstrom or away from it according to whether conditions are bad or good. A careful inquiry is needed before a full report can be made or any useful action contemplated. The only definite statement which can be made here is, unfortunately, not an encouraging one—to the effect that ample evidence has been met with during the Survey to leave no doubt whatever that a special inquiry would reveal most unsatisfactory conditions affecting a large proportion of the women and girl workers of London.

Origins

Regarding the various origins of the girls and women found at the Homes and the channels through which they drift into the ken of the rescue workers, a careful analysis has revealed some unexpected facts.

In the first place it was found that almost one-half of the inmates of the London Homes are drawn from outside the Metropolis. This is accounted for to some extent by the fact that the Preventive Homes—a large

factor—usually accept young girls and children from all over the country, some of them even receiving no London girls at all. Apart from this there are several influences governing the numbers applying at the London Homes. At times a big strike or lock-out in the provinces will send large numbers flocking to London to seek for employment. On the other hand, the seasonal trades, such as hop-picking and strawberry gathering, exert a contrary influence.

In addition to these fluctuating influences there are various more stable factors which combine to set a regular stream towards London of the girls and women of the types under consideration. Their reasons for coming are various. Higher wages constitute the attraction for many of them, as also does the desire to "see life" and to take advantage of the many opportunities for amusement which only London can offer. This glamour of the Capital falls upon a multitude of men and women of all ages and in all ranks of society, but it probably makes a very particular appeal to the romantic and imaginative country-bred girl of not very strong character. She is misled by false descriptions of life and opportunities in London, whether conveyed by sensational newspaper reports, cinemas or romantic fiction. Under this influence, weary of the monotony of her home life and craving for excitement and adventure, she takes the plunge—in a spirit of adventure similar to that which impels a boy to leave school and run away to sea—and perhaps finds herself before long without money and on the streets in company with a woman of bad character. The simplicity and credulity of some of these girls is remarkable; one instance was brought to the notice of the writer of a young country girl, found loitering on the street, who, when questioned, admitted that in this way she had hoped to meet "some fine gentleman who would ask her to marry him." Indeed the prospect of contracting a brilliant marriage—

probably traceable again to the influence of cheap fiction—appears to be at the back of the minds of quite a number of these girls.

There are girls also who have got into trouble in their home districts, having either been discovered in wrongdoing or finding themselves about to become mothers, who often migrate to London with very limited financial resources, to hide from their relatives and friends. The converse of this of course also applies, and it may be added regarding the origin of the girls in the London Homes that, although about half of them appear to be drawn from the country, there is no doubt that the provincial Homes admit a certain proportion of London girls in return.

A small number of foreign women is found in the Homes. Some of these are preventive cases, such as those who have been met on arrival in this country by representatives of one or other of the special agencies with an international connection who make it their business to safeguard girls travelling alone. Some of these girls are found to be in possession of addresses of bad houses, given them by some chance acquaintance abroad; they are sometimes lodged for a time in one of the Hostels until more suitable arrangements can be made. Others of these foreign women are either those who have drifted into an irregular life or prostitutes who have come from abroad with the definite intention of taking up their trade in this country. The latter may have been evicted from foreign licensed houses owing to their having contracted venereal disease; many of this type are to be found in certain districts of London, plying particularly boldly by day as well as by night. These are very little concerned with the Rescue Homes, but they sometimes make use of the emergency accommodation afforded.

We have remarked elsewhere upon the desirability of ensuring that the work of the Rescue Homes be suitably made known, in order that no girl in need of

help shall suffer from ignorance as to where to apply, and we have quoted a poignant story illustrating the unnecessary mental and physical agony which may result from such ignorance.

As it may be assumed that the greater number of applicants reach the Homes through the best-informed channels an examination of the immediate sources whence the girls and women come to the Homes should assist us to form an opinion upon the important question as to the completeness and efficiency of the present organization and distribution of information. Figures are only available for about half of the institutions, since some do not keep records of this kind at all; details have been collected, however, applying to 3,022 individuals dealt with during twelve months.

Apart from the distributing and re-distributing work of the rescue agencies themselves, which accounts for about one-half of the above number, it appears that the Police and the Women Police were chiefly responsible for giving the necessary information or for personally conducting the women to the Homes. This applies particularly to the Emergency Homes. An appreciable number were also received from the Police Courts, and a very valuable part of the work is, of course, concerned with the care of these cases. The hospitals passed very many girls and women into the Maternity Homes and into those dealing with venereal disease. Poor Law authorities also took advantage of the facilities offered at the Homes, and drafted cases to them. A number were received from prison.

This completes the tale of the important channels through which the Homes receive their charges. A number of subsidiary sources account for about one-fifth of the total. Some, for example, were sent in by parents, relations or friends, who happened to know of the work of the Homes, by doctors, clergy, parish

workers, or by their own employers; others came from various charitable organizations or associations, girls' clubs and orphanages. A few discovered the Homes through advertisements and made personal application.

From the above it appears that the means at present operating to bring information as to the available rescue provision to the notice of those who may be in need of it are of a somewhat fortuitous nature. A steady flow of individual cases is observed along a few well-defined channels, for instance, from the emergency of Police Court or hospital work, or where distress of the open street encounters well-informed units of the Police or Women Police. These are all emergency channels opening, like safety-valves, only where the situation is acute. As regards less urgent needs, and purely preventive work, there are, of course, existing lines along which the necessary information is communicated, but the organization does not appear to be by any means well co-ordinated or comprehensive. It is likely that considerable improvement could be effected here, and it is a question whether an increase in the efficiency of this machinery would not result in the Voluntary Homes receiving applications considerably in excess of the numbers with which they are now competent to cope.

If it should be found possible in the future to make still more active attempts to reach the girls and women in need, rather than to wait for them to discover, or be brought to, the Homes, certain details would seem to call for first consideration. There is at present undoubtedly a deficiency of street-patrol workers, particularly in certain areas. This work is one of the most difficult forms which a rescue worker can attempt; it is often most distasteful also, but the results achieved are highly encouraging. Many girls in urgent need, and many others on the verge of the abyss, could certainly be reclaimed in this way. Since the reduction in the strength of the Women Police in

the Metropolis, and the virtual cessation of their street-patrol work, there has been a very noticeable diminution in the numbers received at some of the Homes.

Again, the tendency already noted for some matrons, of those Homes not affiliated to an Agency, to work in "water-tight compartments," taking very little active interest in work of a similar nature which may be going forward outside their immediate neighbourhood does not assist in the smooth distribution of cases. The result of this is that, if a girl applies at a Home which happens to be full, or for any other reason cannot receive her, she is not always able to obtain reliable information or advice as to where to apply, and may make more than one fruitless journey before she is taken in.

It would probably be an advantage if telephones could be provided at a greater proportion of the Homes and if information could be distributed periodically which would be likely to awaken among matrons and superintendents a wider knowledge of, and interest in, the work of other institutions. The potential value of a central co-ordinating agency is perhaps as obvious in connection with the question of contact with would-be applicants and inter-communication among the Homes as in any other branch of the work.

CHAPTER IX

Education in the Homes — Opportunities neglected — Previous experiments — Possibilities — Sex-education — Vocational training—Difficulties—Facilities available— Recreation: indoor and outdoor—Possible developments.

SINCE there are found in the Homes many very young girls as well as a large proportion of poorly-educated women, the question of attempting the education of these types is of first importance. The present provision of this kind can only be described as definitely inadequate and unsatisfactory. Among one hundred and twenty-seven Homes, excluding Emergency Shelters, there are only twenty-two which provide any form of general education. This serious position is not to be ascribed to any fault of those in charge of the Homes. The matrons, for the most part, realize this deficiency in the training provided, but they are handicapped in a variety of ways in any attempt to improve the position.

Homes which deal with a proportion of children under school age arrange for these to attend school. In three Homes only instruction is given by visiting London County Council teachers in class subjects —singing, hygiene and physical drill. Other subjects found to be taught spasmodically here and there among the Homes are—general knowledge, home laundry, Shakespeare, psychology, housewifery, making-up clothes, while lectures on various subjects are also given.

The above applies almost entirely to those Homes

where the girls stay twelve months or longer; the education provided at Homes of other types is almost nil. At one Home a troop of Girl Guides has been formed, and this has been found a most valuable asset, both from an educative and disciplinary point of view.

In any criticism of the efforts at present made to provide education for the inmates of the Homes three important factors must be carefully considered. In the first place it must be realized that many of the Long-stay Homes are dependent, at least in part, upon the income accruing from their industries of laundry or needlework. They are, therefore, quite unable to interrupt this work for several hours a day in order that the time may be given up to educative classes, while at the end of the day's work the girls cannot reasonably be expected to sacrifice their leisure for a similar purpose. This applies even more forcibly to the Maternity Homes where, in addition to the difficulties outlined above, the health of the prospective, or newly-made, mother constitutes a further obstacle to any consistent attempt at education. Probably for this reason very few Maternity Homes have any educational provision. Secondly, the matrons themselves are not usually qualified to teach the required subjects, and they cannot afford to pay any considerable sums for outside assistance. They are seldom well-informed as to the facilities for free, or municipally-assisted instruction which may be available and, even in connection with this, special problems are liable to arise owing to the difficulty of complying with regulations framed for students more normally situated. Thirdly—and most serious of all—the fact continually obtrudes itself, and can never be ignored, that a proportion of these girls are often in an abnormal mental condition. Some of them are found to be very quick and clever; others are of such poor mental capacity that they appear to be quite unable to learn anything within a reasonable period, if at all

This is the old problem of the uncertifiable case of mental disability with which we have dealt at some length above; it is met with at almost every turn. It has happened that London County Council teachers who were engaged at the Homes have been obliged to discontinue their classes, since they were unable to make any headway with their pupils. Again, this low mental capacity, or abnormality, while it is not an attribute of all the girls and women at the Homes, is most assuredly a very serious factor which must be reckoned with in any schemes which may be formulated for educational and vocational training.

Although the problem of providing sufficient educational training in the Voluntary Homes is thus seen to be bristling with difficulties, it is by no means insoluble. Preliminary inquiries have been made as to the possibilities, and many useful facts have already emerged.

In this connection it is interesting to note that the first Adult School in this country was started towards the end of the eighteenth century; a wide campaign was inaugurated about 1812 with the object of teaching adults to read and write, and it is recorded that at about this time considerable efforts were directed towards benefiting in this way inmates of prisons and also of institutions for women of immoral type.

An experimental scheme has within recent years been started again in convict prisons, and has proved most successful; it is to be hoped that history is about to repeat itself in both directions, and that the schemes which are now under consideration for the Rescue Homes will also succeed.

It would appear useless, at least in the early stages, to attempt anything of this kind in those Homes where the girls stay for less than six months, and it would seem advisable that all Maternity Homes should be excluded from the first scheme, owing to the special difficulties therein encountered.

It has been suggested that the education should be carried out, both in classes formed under the Board of Education's scheme of grants, and in connection with the Evening Institutes of the London County Council, and that a very great deal of work of this kind could also be carried out by voluntary workers.

Voluntary workers have already done, and are doing, educative work of the very greatest value in the prisons, and there is strong evidence that there would be no lack of volunteers to undertake education in the Homes also. A number of specialized organizations have already displayed great keenness and willingness to help.

It is generally agreed that the instruction should incline towards the less strenuous, and more interesting and amusing, subjects at first. Experience, as at women's institutes, has shown that, if this plan is followed, interest is not killed at the outset, and a demand for knowledge of more solid and serious subjects arises spontaneously in due course. The first aim, in fact, should be to interest rather than instruct the girls. In other words—*stimulation* again —followed by curiosity : our former allies.

Daytime classes, where possible, seem to promise better results than evening classes, and early efforts would probably be most successfully directed towards the formation of libraries—either in the individual Homes or under a centralized lending scheme—singing classes, the reading of plays, amateur theatrical performances, and where possible the formation of Girl Guide Troops. A great deal of good influence could be brought to bear by the right choice of books for the libraries; singing is useful, and is always found to be popular; the taking of a reading or acting part in a play appeals to everyone, and has great educative possibilities in itself, while the value of the Girl Guide training and discipline can hardly be over-estimated.

Criticism may be advanced to the effect that

education—or, as some may prefer to call it, "amusement" of this nature—is somewhat of a luxury, and can be of little use to a girl who has drifted into difficulties and whose chief concern, on leaving the Home, will be the question of how to earn her living honestly. The reply to such criticism is that this education—or amusement—has a very definite value in that it constitutes a flank attack upon the limited and undesirable view of life which many of these girls possess. Under its influence new interests are aroused in a somewhat stagnant mentality. The arousing of new interests is surely the most hopeful, as well as the only permanent, way of ousting deep-rooted misconceptions and undesirable obsessions. It is hardly possible merely to neutralize the latter and leave the mind of the subject swept and garnished; neither is such a course safe—since the eight devils are always at the threshold.

Education, then, should be so applied, and the subjects so wisely chosen, that, not only will interest be aroused, but that it may be possible for the pupil to feed that interest after having left the Home. It is unlikely that upon leaving she would pursue her studies of geography, history or mathematics if such subjects had been compulsory at the Home. However much, or little, good it may do her at the time to know the dates of all the Kings of England, or the exact location of Trichinopoli, such knowledge will not help her to pass a dull "arternoon-off" in an intelligent and harmless manner.

True education is perhaps of more importance than anything else in the case of those factory girls who are normally engaged upon monotonous repetition work.

Sex-Education

The matter of sex-education is one which stands by itself. Very different views are held on this question, and we shall consider it more fully in a later chapter. The chief trouble in connection with the majority of the girls found in the Rescue Homes is, not that they are ignorant of the facts, but that they have acquired their knowledge in a totally wrong and sordid manner, regarding the whole subject from an unfortunate and distorted angle of view. They are not always very well informed either as to the dangers to which they may expose themselves through wrongdoing.

Regarding the Preventive Homes, where a larger proportion of young and uninstructed girls are received, the problem is somewhat different. It will be sufficient to state here that, although at some few institutions this matter does not seem to be dealt with effectively, at the majority the importance of giving necessary instruction regarding the basic facts and dangers of sex to such girls as need enlightenment on leaving the Homes is fully realized and acted upon by the matrons.

Vocational Training

Problems of vocational training are closely allied to those of education. While educational effort should aim primarily at broadening a girl's mental outlook and arousing some fresh interest to replace undesirable preoccupations, vocational training is concerned with instruction in those subjects which will be of more material advantage and enable the individual to become economically self-supporting.

Vocational training is beset by all the difficulties which we have noted above in connection with

education, and has, in addition, some special problems of its own. At present the greater part of the vocational training is confined to the Long-stay, Preventive and Maternity Homes. Amongst a total of one hundred and forty-five Homes an attempt is made to teach domestic service in fifty-three, needlework in thirty, laundry in twenty-seven, and various other occupations in thirteen. These subsidiary occupations include millinery, dressmaking (by London County Council teachers), knitting, raffia work, basket-making, nursemaid's duties, rug-making, chair-caning and gardening. It will be seen that some of the latter subjects are by no means practical for after-use, merely serving as useful methods of keeping the girls occupied and bringing in a certain small revenue to the Home.

Moreover, in many of the Homes included in the above figures as teaching useful subjects, such as laundry or domestic service, the instruction is often merely incidental to the industry or work carried on in the Home; the girls only pick up a certain amount of knowledge from the repetition of duties which happen to fall to their lot.

One Long-stay Home provides no vocational training at all; there are eight others which make no training provision beyond that for domestic service, and this is rather of the incidental nature already referred to and, therefore, in view of the great difference between the conditions obtaining in such Homes and in private houses where the girls hope to find employment, almost valueless.

There would appear, then, on the whole, to be some neglect of the opportunities presented, in spite of all difficulties, for providing the girls and women who remain at the Homes for long periods with some useful vocational training. This is a most serious omission, since the whole purpose of the Home is likely to be defeated if a girl, on leaving, is not fully

equipped to support herself in honest employment. It is only fair to state that this deficiency is fully realized by many matrons and superintendents and is a cause of grave concern to them; the omission is probably due to the very real difficulty of deciding upon suitable and practicable subjects for instruction, to lack of time, lack of funds, and lack of knowledge as to how expert advice and assistance can be obtained.

Here again is a very useful task for a central co-ordinating body.

Special difficulties affecting this problem of vocational training are several. There is an unwillingness to co-operate noticeable among the Homes and a certain amount of sectarian feeling; there are rules that forbid girls to attend outside classes; in some Homes there are small numbers all requiring instruction in different subjects. The difficulty connected with the mental capacity of the girls is here again met with, although the experience at different Voluntary Homes and Agencies differs materially according to the type of girl dealt with. In some cases, for instance, girls have been found incapable of learning even the simplest kinds of needlework; others have been trained into skilled needlewomen able to produce very artistic and beautiful work. For girls of the former type the farm colonies or industrial homes suggested earlier appear to be the only hopeful solution.

At least one experimental scheme for providing vocational training has been attempted in the past, but this failed to develop owing to shortage of funds. In any future scheme special care will need to be exercised to concentrate upon really practical subjects only; external trade and economic conditions need to be carefully studied before any new venture is made. For example, it is useless for a Home in London to start a glove-making industry with the idea of providing instruction in this trade. There is a vast mass of such factory (piece-work) trades, where quick

production is an essential feature. Factory conditions cannot be reproduced in the Homes, since this would involve working on competitive factory lines and also the need to dispose of the products at remunerative prices.

The most promising subjects would appear to be domestic service—for, although the majority of the girls at the Homes already describe themselves as domestic servants, they are not as a rule any more justified in so doing than are a proportion of those least efficient applicants at a servants' registry office who enter their names under the same description—shorthand, typing and book-keeping, while there are other highly-skilled subjects, such as millinery, dress-making, fine needlework, bespoke tailoring, etc., which are only suited to special cases.

The problem of vocational training for the girls and women at the Homes is viewed most sympathetically by the Authorities within whose province the assistance of such activities falls. There is no doubt that their assistance can be relied upon so far as regulations permit. It remains for some central organization to take up the threads, to arouse at first the enthusiasm of the matrons and superintendents and obtain their goodwill, to show them what facilities are available and to help them in combining official assistance and private voluntary enterprise to form a comprehensive working scheme.

Recreation

The provision of recreation and amusement for the inmates of the Homes is obviously a matter of considerable moment, and it is, on the whole, very effectively dealt with. Nearly every Home has a room which can be used for recreation, and some have a special room reserved for indoor games. The

ordinary indoor amusements consist of table games, music of some kind, or gramophone, singing, dancing, and reading. In addition to these casual amusements organized indoor recreation is provided at some of the institutions. There are, for instance, weekly social evenings, when visitors who are interested in the work attend to read or sing to the girls; there are arranged also in some Homes whist drives, visits to cinemas, morris dancing or gymnasium.

Indoor recreation is, in fact, well provided for. The only suggestion which the writer would venture to make in this connection is that it should be a matter for consideration, with the object of economizing time, as to how far the educational training of a recreational nature outlined above could be introduced into the time now spent on more or less vague amusements. This plan, if wisely carried out, should not have the semblance of an exchange from leisure to compulsory learning, but would rather present the desired subjects in the guise of a more varied and interesting and better organized entertainment.

To provide for outdoor recreation and a sufficiency of fresh air and exercise for the girls in the Homes is often a matter of considerable difficulty in London, and the position here is not so satisfactory. At the large Emergency Homes and Short-stay Hostels it is, of course, both impossible and unnecessary. Of the others, many Homes have no garden at all; the majority have small gardens, while a few have very large and beautiful grounds extending to as much as fifty acres. It is seldom that there is found any provision for organized recreation at all comparable to the outdoor games played at any ordinary school. Even in the case of those Homes possessed of ample funds, where large grounds are available and the number of girls resident would make team games possible, the opportunities are often neglected. At a few of the Homes an attempt is made at organizing

games such as net-ball and cricket, while at others tennis, badminton or spiropole may be played, or outdoor drill or skipping classes held.

There are, unfortunately, a few Homes where no outdoor recreation is provided at all, and some of these have not even a garden. It is also said that the girls are not allowed out of the Homes as they cannot be trusted. In a Home of this stamp the front door is usually kept locked and the girls are virtually prisoners. Undesirable conditions of this kind are, happily, exceedingly rare, and they are to be found at one or two of the houses only.

Apart from the outdoor games other forms of outdoor recreation are often arranged. In almost every case girls are taken for walks at least twice a week, and they may be sent out alone or in couples on messages or errands at other times. Parties are also taken periodically for picnics and excursions to the parks, and to such places as Kew Gardens, the Zoological Gardens or the museums, or for omnibus rides. At one Home the girls are taken annually for a fortnight to the seaside, at another occasional trips to Southend are arranged; these are, of course, uncommon luxuries quite beyond the reach of the ordinary small Home which is fighting an uphill battle against shortage of funds.

Open-air meals in the garden during the Summer are a popular feature at a few institutions. This appears to be a harmless and commendable method of providing a change in the routine as well as guaranteeing a plentiful supply of fresh air. The writer ventured to suggest to matrons of some other institutions that the custom might with advantage be more generally adopted. The reception of this suggestion was not encouraging: at one Home, receiving preventive cases aged fourteen to seventeen, where laundry-work and the holding of innumerable compulsory religious services appeared to be the main

reason for its existence, the comment was that " such a thing would never do—too bad for discipline." The writer has so far failed completely to understand the argument, and still holds to his original opinion: he would like to recommend to the notice of any matrons or superintendents who may read these pages the plan of allowing the girls to take meals out-of-doors in fine weather as solving, at least in part, one of the greatest difficulties confronting those who have to administer a Home in a great city.

Beyond the obvious necessity for an occasional change of scene from the inside of the Home the value of sufficient fresh air and exercise to these girls is inestimable. Physiologically and mentally this is absolutely essential, and should form as indispensable a part of the Home routine as meal-times; it is as important for spiritual well-being as the morning or evening prayer, and should be as unfailingly observed. *Mens sana in corpore sano*—if ever the Latin proverb has a direct significance it is in the case of these girls in the Rescue Homes, for their mental outlook is so often warped or twisted in some strange fashion that marches with the unruly impulses of their bodies. And one method of attacking a disorder of the mind is by means of the reaction upon it resulting from the controlled use of the physical vehicle.

Team games, again, have their own special value in addition to the exercise involved—their influence towards playing fair and playing for the side—both valuable principles for any man or woman to acquire and certainly not lost upon those whom we are considering.

Formidable difficulties are seen to exist in the way of providing this outdoor recreation. A careful analysis of the present position, however, leads to the conclusion that the great importance of this aspect of the work has not been generally realized. It seems that, even with the facilities now available, a good deal

more could be done, while it should not be impossible to find additional ways of meeting the need.

It is suggested that, in the case of those Homes where there is no garden, or only a very small one, the public parks might often be utilized for games, and that inter-Home competitive matches might ultimately be possible; they would certainly supply valuable training.

It is possible that some central organization would need to take this matter in hand before all the possibilities could be utilized.

CHAPTER X

AFTER-CARE

" I fled Him, down the nights and down the days;
I fled Him, down the arches of the years;
I fled Him, down the labyrinthine ways
Of my own mind; and in the mist of tears
I hid from Him, and under running laughter.
Up vistaed hopes, I sped;
And shot, precipitated,
Adown Titanic glooms of chasmèd fears,
From those strong Feet that followed, followed after."
—*Francis Thompson, " The Hound of Heaven."*

Importance of after-care—Difficulties—Alternative methods employed—Of unmarried mothers and babies—Desirable and undesirable arrangements.

THERE is fabled to have existed, in some foreign country—probably China—a law whereby a man who rescued another from drowning became responsible for the maintenance of the latter in food, shelter and clothing for the rest of his life; the argument presumably being that, except for the intervention of the rescuer, the rescued would certainly have had no further cause for concern as to the provision of his daily bread, roof or raiment.

Rescue work appears to offer a parallel to the logic of this law, with the notable exception that here, even in the event of the sinking person going under, there is not a cessation of expense, but a variable, and often incalculably increased burden imposed upon the public and the State. When, however, the girl in danger is

reclaimed, the rescuer stands very much in the shoes of his, or her, Chinese counterpart; for even when a girl has been persuaded from a course of wrongdoing, undergone a period of training and character-formation in a Home, and is satisfactorily established in some self-supporting employment, the task of the rescue worker is often not ended, but begun anew and under more difficult conditions. Some of these girls need to be, and actually are, kept under surveillance for periods of five, ten, or even twenty years.

This "after-care" work has many aspects. Its importance is realized in nearly every Home, and strenuous efforts are made to fill the need. Unfortunately, in the case of the smaller independent Homes, efficient and complete after-care is a sheer impossibility. Each year brings a new crop of "old girls" who have left the Home, and the matron is quite unable, occupied as she is by the exacting duties of the Home routine, to keep in touch with this ever-increasing family. In an heroic attempt to do so some matrons write an average number of three letters a day in addition to visiting periodically those girls who may be in employment in her vicinity, and holding regular "at homes" at which any "old girl" is welcomed. At one Home a letter is sent quarterly to every girl who has ever passed through the Home; another receives an average of sixty visits per month from "old girls"; several have clubs which serve a similar purpose.

The first need of a girl on leaving a Home is, of course, employment. It is a striking fact that the matrons and superintendents of those institutions where the girls stay for more than a few days are usually able to place them in situations—usually as domestic servants. Some of the Longer-stay Homes provide them with an outfit in addition. Even at the Emergency Homes, where the population changes very rapidly, a proportion are successfully placed. It is a

point of honour among the matrons that no girl who is fit for work shall leave without a situation being found for her, and the success achieved in this difficult task of finding employment is truly amazing.

The larger rescue organizations maintain separate after-care departments, thus relieving the matrons of individual Homes of this responsibility. The methods adopted by these departments will be noted later.

Some girls of more intelligent type are placed in better situations, and others, with some training, such as typists and business girls, are usually reinstated in that level in the scale of employment from which they originated. Some, who are not placed in situations, are either passed on to other institutions or are received by friends or relatives.

A plan adopted by one Home has much to recommend it; here the girls, on leaving, are not immediately allowed to resume their independence but are drafted to a Hostel, whence they go out to daily work, returning to a certain amount of supervision in the evenings, until they are judged to be fit to make their way alone. Safe and inexpensive lodgings are then found for them, or they go into domestic service. A certain proportion are lost sight of; this often means that they are doing well, but do not wish to be associated again with the Home, although grateful for what has been done for them. A few, who refuse to benefit by the help offered at the Homes, leave of their own accord and disappear, at least for the time being, from the rescue workers' ken.

All girls are encouraged to correspond with the Homes they have left, and to ask advice in any difficulty. Many return and spend their weekly free afternoons, or even their annual holidays, at the Homes, and the matrons also visit them in their situations. In nearly every Home the matrons are ready, when the accommodation permits, to lodge those who are out of work, changing situations or in

temporary financial difficulties. " Old girls " are also invited to attend any special festivals, such as Christmas or Easter parties, or periodical reunion gatherings.

These facts demonstrate the existence of the right atmosphere in the majority of the institutions. The matrons regard it as a basic principle of successful after-care that the girls should look upon their institutions, not as penal establishments from which an early escape is most to be desired, but as a true *home* where real friends at all times await them, and to whom they may return whenever they are in need of help, or advice.

A number of Homes have a system of money rewards, presents or medals which are given to girls who remain in their situations for a long time, the final award being given in some cases in the seventh year.

At two Homes only, out of all those visited in the London area, was there found to be no provision for after-care, and in each case there was good reason for the omission.

Apart from the very knotty problem of making the most suitable after-care arrangements for unmarried mothers and their babies, there is no doubt that the after-care provision at the Homes in London is very satisfactory. To anyone who has the most elementary knowledge of the work the results achieved appear little short of miraculous. That there still remains something to be desired is easily accounted for by the fact that the matrons and superintendents are only human, and unable to crowd more than a day's work into the twenty-four hours. They cannot find as much time as they would like for letter-writing and visiting, while shortage of accommodation also often prevents them from inviting girls to return to the Homes when in difficulties. The centralized after-care arrangements of the larger agencies certainly relieve the

matrons of this extra duty, but at the expense of the loss of that personal touch which is undoubtedly one of the greatest assets of after-care work. A girl is more readily influenced by the matron who has seen her through her worst trouble than she is by another individual, even though the latter be a specially trained after-care worker. An alternative solution which seems to have much to recommend it is that of attaching an after-care officer permanently to each Home or group of smaller Homes. This officer keeps in touch by means of weekly letters or visits, and for at least three years, with every girl who has passed through the Home. If a girl shows any signs of unsteadiness the period is extended. Occasional letters are sent, or visits made, afterwards for many years. This system combines the advantages of relieving the matrons of extra work and ensuring that the after-care work is carried out by a worker who has become known personally to each girl while she was actually at the Home. It is suggested that some organization of this kind might be built up with the aid of voluntary workers to relieve the matrons of those Homes which are not affiliated to any Society. It would be difficult to imagine any outlet for the enthusiasm of voluntary workers which would promise more valuable results.

An objection is sometimes raised to the visits of workers to girls in situations on the grounds that they are thus identified at once with a Rescue Home. This has been overcome in one instance by the formation of an Insurance Lodge, which girls passing through the Homes are asked to join, and all subsequent visits are conducted ostensibly in connection with the Lodge.

Unmarried Mothers

The after-care of unmarried mothers with babies is a special problem exhibiting a dual nature. There

are special difficulties in the way of making satisfactory arrangements for the baby. The mothers are not seldom as young as fourteen or fifteen; they have no economic value in the employment market, and the father of the infant is often untraceable. The question as to how these children—for they are nothing more—can be so trained and placed as to be in a position to support two lives, or alternatively, cared for until they reach a more responsible age, still awaits a satisfactory solution.

Even in the case of the majority of unmarried mothers, whose average age is about twenty-one, the matter is by no means a simple one. Regarding the girls themselves, the statements made in the previous section as to the help offered by the Homes apply in their entirety. In addition, those young mothers, who assume complete charge of their children, are encouraged to bring them to the matrons at any time to ask for advice as to treatment. Most of these, of course, have received no preparation for motherhood, unless it be a few weeks spent at the Maternity Home before their confinement, and they are naturally ignorant of the first principles of infant care.

The greater number, however, of the illegitimate babies born at the Homes are sent to foster-mothers. Opinions are divided as to the excellence or otherwise of this plan. Success in any given case probably depends upon several individual factors—the efficiency and goodwill of the foster-mother chosen, the health of the baby and the character and nature of employment of the mother herself. On the whole the arrangement works well, and it is often the only one possible.

In some cases the grand-parents take charge of the child; more often they refuse to recognize it at first and they usually object to receiving it until it has reached the age of about two years. A few babies are received with their mothers when they go into domestic

service. This plan has many advocates; it is held by some workers to be the ideal solution; it is, however, always difficult to arrange. It is also of doubtful advisability, since the girl, unless she is of exceptional character, and her employer unusually considerate, is almost certain to be torn between two anxieties, so that either her work or the health of her baby will suffer. She is also liable to be branded to all members of the family, to visitors and tradespeople as a girl of immoral character, and this is obviously highly undesirable.

Other solutions are to send the baby to a foster-home or crèche, where it will be cared for by experts and visited at times by its mother, or to get it adopted.

From one Home the mother and baby are sent to selected lodgings at about fifteen shillings per week where the landlady will take a personal interest in both, and arrangements are made that a Health Visitor shall call periodically to see the child. This seems a very good plan, but suitable lodgings of this nature are not easily found.

The affiliation of the child, when possible, has an important bearing upon the matter of after-care. In this connection legal difficulties often arise, and one large agency maintains a special department to deal with these cases only. In one year, out of one hundred and sixty-four cases, ninety-four were satisfactorily settled. Even when an affiliation order has been secured, difficulties are not at an end : the man in the case often attempts to evade the payments, and the regular collection of these on behalf of the mother entails a great deal of work.

In considering in detail the best arrangement that can be made for the child it will become evident that many factors have to be taken into account and that, as might be expected, the ideal treatment will vary according to the nature of the individual. Broadly speaking there can be no doubt that it is of the first

importance that the mother and child should be kept together whenever this is possible, and for as long as possible. There may be some few cases where separation appears advisable, as when the mother is seriously mentally afflicted; in the case of a girl of good standing, employed in a responsible position, whose prospects would be ruined by the fact of her having an illegitimate child becoming known; or again where a girl may have very good reasons for not wishing her parents to discover her secret. Normally the mother is to be induced to take an interest in her child, to learn how to care for it, and to be made to realize that she has incurred a responsibility which she may by no means evade. This is a task which proves not so difficult as might appear likely. It is true that the girl often does not want the baby, and at first regards its arrival with disfavour, but the maternal instinct powerfully asserts itself and usually overcomes this initial repulsion in a very short time. Natural affection for her child and a realization of its dependence upon her care also have a strong steadying effect on the average girl, and often effect a great change in her nature and outlook upon life. Breast-feeding, whenever this is possible, will assist mother-nature to assert itself in these very desirable directions.

Such practices, therefore, as adoption, or other plans which relieve the mother of all responsibility in regard to her baby are for these reasons to be avoided. It is by no means an uncommon occurrence for a girl, who has had her baby adopted, to become the mother of a second or even a third illegitimate child, and it is considered by many workers that this is far more likely to occur when the girl thus escapes responsibility for the first. Adoption is at best an unnatural course, and probably for this reason brings its own penalty.

Unfortunately there are in existence agencies which make a business of arranging for the adoption of children. A number of these are undoubtedly of

questionable character—and they are not by any means obscure concerns. In this connection some most unsavoury evidence has been brought to the notice of the writer, and documentary proof has been seen by him. Arrangements are sometimes made whereby the father or mother of the child is induced to pay a lump sum—and often a most insufficient sum—on the understanding that he or she shall never see the child or be concerned with it again.

The fate of a child which starts life under such conditions, in the care of a mercenary organization, whose first concern is to make a profit out of the small initial payment, can hardly be an auspicious one; there is reason to suspect that it is sometimes tragic. Such an arrangement also, as the reader will readily perceive, can easily lay the parents open to a delicate process of blackmail, so that the first payment need not by any means necessarily be the last.

Voluntary adoption may in very rare and special cases prove to be the best solution, but such arrangements as are referred to here are most unsatisfactory and undesirable in every way. The mother is relieved of all responsibility for her child, also she is not brought within the good influence of the Maternity Homes. Far worse than the effect on the mother is the wrong done to the child, since the adopting agency usually has to pay for its maintenance, for a time at least, out of the very meagre sum—from £75 to as little as £20—extracted from the parents. The agency may spend less than this upon the disposal of the child; the writer is uncharitable enough to believe that certain organizations which he has in mind would be most unlikely to spend more. It follows that they cannot afford to be too critical as to the living conditions into which the baby is introduced; nor can they easily arrange for proper periodical inspection of the child. The transaction appears, therefore, as a most unsavoury one, whether viewed in

the light of ethics, of social, or even commercial, morality.

Some of the agencies for adoption are undoubtedly *bona fide* concerns of high standing. It is suggested, however, that the restriction of their activities to the placing of legitimate children would be a wise policy on their part, if only for the reason that the disposal of the others in this manner is a measure that does not meet with the sanction of the majority of experts in rescue work. The methods of the less reputable societies would seem to call for careful investigation with a view to the taking of criminal proceedings.

Probably by far the most practical method of arranging for the baby, after the first few weeks, is that of placing it with a good foster-mother somewhere near the girl's place of employment. This plan allows the mother to visit the child frequently, and yet leaves her free to do her work without anxiety. She still feels keenly her responsibility for its welfare and yet need not allow its existence to become known to others when such revelation would be damaging to her circumstances or her self-respect.

The foster-mother plan, however, is not advocated by all workers. It is said in some cases to be very unsatisfactory. It is obvious that the personal factor very largely enters into the question here. There can be little doubt that, while some foster-mothers may be found slovenly and neglectful, unclean or otherwise inefficient, the majority of those employed are satisfactory, and that, if suitable investigations are made beforehand, and periodical visits of inspection paid, the more serious objections to the arrangement are removed.

If a baby is taken by its grand-parents or other relatives the results are usually equally satisfactory, and it will generally receive more interested care. The only possible objection to such an arrangement is that the mother may not be able to obtain a situation near

enough to allow her to visit the child and, for this or other reasons, may feel that the responsibility has been taken from her shoulders.

The establishment of foster-homes is regarded by many workers as a desirable alternative to the employment of foster-mothers. A number of these institutions already exist, and there is little doubt that, if others were established, they would soon be filled. The advantages of such foster-homes are that the babies receive proper care from skilled workers, and that the mothers can attend and receive instruction in nursery duties. On the other hand, experience has shown that such Homes are open to objection on medical and other grounds. They are very expensive to maintain, and epidemics of children's ailments are liable to occur in them. Beyond this it is stated that young babies are found to be very telepathic and that, where many are collected in one house or ward, conditions of general ill-health, restlessness or failure to thrive, originating in one or two places are apt to spread by telepathic means through the whole number. This is an interesting fact which apparently is proved by experience and also certainly tallies with what might be expected from the established predominant activity of the "subconscious mind" — the telepathic agent — in young children. It is stated that if children of varying ages are dealt with this phenomenon is not so marked.

A very limited number of those girls who do not sleep at their places of business are assisted at those Hostels which specialize in this work. Here the baby is cared for during the daytime absence of the girl, who is able to return to it each evening and spend all her free time with it; she also undertakes the greater part of the nursery duties herself, and is thus kept in very close touch with her child. This arrangement appears to be quite the most satisfactory in the case of those girls who are not in resident service, and it

would probably be an advantage if more of these Hostels could be opened.

Whatever may be the solution in any individual case it is nearly always necessary that an inexperienced young mother should be supervised in the care of her baby for at least sixteen or eighteen months. Where a girl shows any sign of mental disability this principle applies with added force.

The writer has visited a great number of the Maternity Homes in the area and has seen many hundreds of these unfortunate babies of all ages. He feels very strongly that, whatever attitude the world may adopt towards the unmarried mothers, there can be only one feeling towards their children. Some are very fine and healthy babies, but there is a great number pitiably weak and delicate. This is hardly surprising when it is remembered that they are often born—not seldom prematurely—of immature, unsound or mentally afflicted parents. The mothers frequently have quite insufficient preparation for their confinement; many of them suffer keenly from anxiety or depression due to their unhappy circumstances. These influences combine to give the children an unfortunate introduction into the world, and all humane persons will agree that nothing that can be done to mitigate these conditions should be neglected. Those who are born afflicted with congenital venereal disease are, of course, in even worse plight. It is a matter of statistics that the death rate amongst illegitimate children is twice as heavy as amongst others. The thoughtful person, looking upon some of the more weakly of the former, in whom the spark of life is only kept burning by the constant and unremitting care of the nurses, thinking of the difficulties such children have to face in the future in addition to feeble health, will feel that the best thing that can be wished for them is undoubtedly that they may not be permitted to survive.

We have treated superficially of the problems of

after-care as they affect the unmarried mothers and their infants. The question will possibly arise in the mind of the reader as to what becomes of the children when they reach school age and afterwards. Concise information on this point is not very easy to obtain. It appears that many are received by various well-known organizations that care for "waifs and strays"; others enter industrial schools or similar institutions; many finally emigrate. A certain number are permanently adopted by their grand-parents. The parents of the girl are often willing to take an interest in the child at the age of five or six, even if they have displayed the most uncompromising attitude of shocked self-righteousness, and completely disowned both child and mother when the child was born. In rare instances the foster-parents become attached to the child and adopt it permanently.

There are almost certainly other channels through which these children find their place in life, but this matter is somewhat beyond the scope of the subject in hand, and has not been pursued by the writer.

In considering the whole problem of after-care work it is worthy of note that the difficulties are often enormously, and quite unnecessarily, increased by the conditions prevailing at some of the Long-stay Rescue and Preventive Homes. Here, as we have seen, the girls are often secluded in a sheltered atmosphere entirely remote from the happenings of the world outside. In some Homes they are not even allowed to see a daily newspaper for years on end. They thus become accustomed to the convent-like existence; when they leave the Homes and find themselves placed suddenly in independent positions, and obliged to order their own lives, they are naturally unprepared to meet the difficulties and moral dangers of their newly-acquired liberty. If, in these circumstances, a girl behaves in a disappointing manner, it is surely as much the fault of the short-sighted policy of which she

has been a victim as it is due to any inherent vice in the girl herself. This applies particularly to those young girls who leave the Homes without having received any instruction in the elements of sex-knowledge. Some matrons and superintendents cope with this difficulty by sending the girls out to daily work as the date for leaving the Home approaches. By this or other means they are gradually accustomed to an existence where free will and responsibility enter more and more into their mental outlook, and this particular danger is thus lessened.

Such is the problem of after-care. The writer makes no pretence of having entered very deeply into the subject; he hopes, however, that the facts set out will give to the uninitiated reader who is interested in the various aspects of rescue work some idea of the scope of the after-care arrangements that need to be made, and of the difficulty and extreme delicacy of the problems that often arise.

It is indeed no exaggeration to suggest, as we did in the opening paragraph, that, if a worker assumes responsibility for the spiritual welfare of a girl in her 'teens, who is in danger of being swept into the maelstrom of an immoral life, she and her colleagues must be prepared, if necessary, to shoulder the self-imposed burden throughout the girl's whole life: otherwise the task may be indeed well begun, but may remain not more than half done.

In another place we shall suggest that, if preventive work—and, in particular, preventive education for both sexes—could be commenced nearer the cradle, there would be far less necessity for continuing rescue work to within measurable distance of the grave.

CHAPTER XI

RESULTS

" 'Tis not in mortals to command success,
But we'll do more, Sempronius; we'll deserve it."
—*Addison, " Cato."*

Estimates of satisfactory results.

THE reader will naturally feel inclined to ask at this stage, " What is the proportion of successful results? Does it justify the effort expended? "

This is a question which cannot be answered in figures; reliable figures are usually most difficult or impossible to obtain. The definition of a successful result is in itself not easily fixed, since success in the case of any individual is not assured while any likelihood of back-sliding remains. There are, however, some indications available as to the proportion of girls of unsatisfactory moral character who adopt a more regular life as a result of the influences brought to bear upon them during their stay at the Homes.

The results naturally vary considerably at different institutions; they depend, not only upon the ages and types dealt with, but also upon the normal length of stay, the training provided, and—most of all—upon the personality of the matron and the completeness of her after-care organization.

Many matrons decline to give any estimate. They point out that girls who have been regarded as brilliant successes for years will sometimes suddenly lapse into their old ways again, while, conversely, cases which

have long been regarded as incorrigible will suddenly reform: many girls, too, are lost sight of, and this does not by any means indicate that they must be classed as failures. At other Homes, and at some of the agencies, there were produced from records estimates as to successful results worked out to the first place of decimals. It is obvious that such precision is in reality unattainable, and that these figures must be taken with a liberal allowance of the proper seasoning. The figures given to the writer actually varied from as low as ten per cent. to ninety or one hundred per cent.

At some institutions figures have been worked out, based upon records carefully kept over many years. From these it appears that a little more than one-half of the girls dealt with can be classed as "satisfactory," about one-quarter are lost sight of, while the remaining one-quarter is equally divided between "fairly satisfactory" and "unsatisfactory."

The figure of ninety-two per cent. is given by one large agency where careful records are kept. If the definition of success in this case accords with that rather exacting one which we should wish to apply, such a very excellent result might be accounted for by the particularly thorough after-care system adopted by the agency in question. In another instance an earlier figure of sixty-six per cent. for successful cases is stated to have been raised to ninety-five per cent. by a change in policy in the Home whereby greater freedom has been introduced and girls are put on their honour to observe a certain code of conduct instead of being coerced by rules and penalties; a Girl Guide Troop has also been formed at this Home.

Whatever may the exact numerical advantage which may be gained by such a policy it is certain that the benefits which cannot be reckoned in numbers must be vastly enhanced.

Taking the available statistics, and making due

allowance for variable and unknown factors, it is probably safe to assume that about two-thirds of the girls are definitely started, or re-started, in a satisfactory mode of life, so continuing for at least seven to ten years, or indefinitely. The remaining one-third is to be divided among those who may lapse again, those who can only be described as partial successes, and those who definitely fail to derive any benefit from the care expended upon them.

If, therefore, we adopt a very conservative estimate, and it be agreed that the work done at the Homes permanently benefits one-half of the girls and women admitted, we shall be able to form an opinion as to whether the result justifies the expenditure in service and money. If every man accomplished as much as one-half of the things he set out to do the world's affairs would move a very great deal faster than they do at present. In this matter of rescue work a far smaller proportion of demonstrable success would demand its continuance, since it cannot be measured by the positive gauge alone, but must also be considered with reference to the incalculable evil prevented.

CHAPTER XII

RESCUE WORK: GENERAL FACTS

Outside work—Patrol work—The Women Police—The Women's Auxiliary Service—Work on the streets—A fine record—Difficulties of disposal. Venereal disease—Prevalence of the disease—Obstacles and controversial points — Official treatment centres and unofficial treatment — Undesirable activities — Some dangerous superstitions—Ignorance of the perils of venereal disease.

APART from the work carried out within the Homes themselves, an equal interest attaches to certain outside activities and influences closely connected with them.

Outside Work

This work is thought to be the most difficult of all, calling for very special qualities of tact and judgment on the part of those who undertake it, together with a thorough knowledge of the currents and eddies of London's underworld. It has never been easy to find workers with the necessary qualifications for success, and latterly the supply seems to have become still more limited.

The work itself chiefly consists of street patrol work, and mainly involves keeping watch on the conditions and occurrences in the streets and public places, the less reputable lodging-houses, hotels, cafés, etc., the prevention of evil wherever possible by the separation

of couples who are obviously meeting for immoral purposes, and the giving of help and advice to those who may be the victims of misfortune, whether through their own fault or otherwise. Workers appeal to the better nature of the men and endeavour to persuade the women, many of whom become well known to them, to forsake their evil ways of living. Particularly do they attempt to save young girls before they have become hardened to the life.

Most of the work is done late at night, in all weathers, and it is of a most strenuous and trying nature.

Outside rescue work also includes the visiting of women in prison and caring for them when discharged, part of the work of the Police Court Missionaries and the Hospital Almoners, and other activities the too detailed consideration of which would lead us rather far from our subject proper. It should be noted, however, that these activities are, in individual cases, very closely concerned with the reclamation of girls and women, and that valuable results are achieved by these workers in co-operation with the Voluntary Homes.

The amount of street patrol work carried out in London could with advantage be very greatly increased. Several agencies make strenuous efforts to cope with this very pressing need. One large organization attaches an outside worker to each of its Homes and, in addition, maintains a staff of experienced patrols, each of whom is accompanied on her beat by two learners. Other agencies concentrate specially on those areas in the West End most in need of attention. Some of the smaller independent Homes attempt a certain amount of outside work, but it is usually impossible for the staff to spare much time for anything beyond the actual work of the Home.

Most valuable patrol work has been done, and to a lesser extent is still being done, by the Women Police.

The Voluntary Women Patrols were first recognized in 1916, and were employed on patrol and other police duties in connection with women and children. As many as 4,000 to 5,000 Women Patrols were at one time active in this country. As a direct result of the work done by this body the official Women Police were established in 1918 under their own woman superintendent. This Force, in London, including officers, at one time numbered 110.

During the year 1921 a total number of 1,131 girls and women were passed into the Voluntary Homes of London by the Women Police alone, while from 6,000 to 7,000 were given temporary shelter. Their work was very highly commended by more than one Commissioner of Police but, in spite of its obvious value, the Force in London was reduced to twenty under the Geddes economy scheme. These remaining women officers were then employed chiefly on ordinary police duties, working under the orders of Divisional Superintendents, and were hardly able to do any special work. In a number of provincial towns a much smaller reduction, or none at all, was made, the movement receiving the enthusiastic support of the Chief Constables. At the present date Women Police are working successfully under the Chief Constables at Birmingham, Colchester, Grantham, Oxford, Cambridge and elsewhere, while the first-named city employs six in uniform, and also has a member of the Women Police in the Criminal Investigation Department.

The reinstatement of the Force in London upon an effective basis appears now to be proceeding satisfactorily, and the majority of those in touch with the difficulties of rescue work regard this move as indispensable. Many experts express the opinion that no Police Force can be completely effective without its quota of women officers.

The women are able to tackle certain problems and

situations with a success that is impossible to men. It is claimed that they act as a stronger deterrent force, for instance, when dealing with male offenders; they can undertake more moral and social work, while certain special cases fall naturally within the province of the Women Police officer. The taking of statements in women's special cases can better be done by them, and in cases of criminal assaults on children; the attending of women prisoners in Police Courts and the exercise of deterrent influence among young children in the streets and parks are also duties best carried out by women.

A very valuable work which was carried out by the Women Police before their reduction was the regular visiting of seamen's cafés and restaurants in the East End. In these places numbers of coloured men are always to be found in company with white girls and women. There appears to be a growing tendency for white girls to associate for immoral purposes with blacks, and this is an evil which requires very drastic treatment. Coloured men would seem to possess a peculiar fascination for women of a certain type. A number marry black men and also Chinese, and, although they are said on the whole to be very well treated by their husbands, the Chinese usually desert them ultimately, and return to their own country. The Women Police, by entering cafés and other meeting places in the East End and inducing white women found therein to leave, exercised a valuable check on such associations, but this work unfortunately had to be dropped when the reduction in the Force was made.

The matrons and superintendents of the Voluntary Homes speak most enthusiastically of the assistance rendered by the Women Police, and there can be no doubt that a carefully selected and trained Force, if kept well-informed of the facilities available at the Homes, would again do most valuable street patrol

work and help to ease the increasing difficulty of finding suitable unofficial workers. The uniform is thought to give the Women Police additional authority compared with that exercised by voluntary workers. Opinions, however, are divided on this score, and it appears that—as in the case of the Men Police—there are occasions when the wearing of plain clothes can better assist the work in hand.

The reader must be cautioned against confusing the official Women Police with the unofficial movement of a similar nature which was founded in 1914 by Miss Nina Boyle of the Freedom League, and later taken over by Miss Damer Dawson. These women did most excellent work also, but were never officially recognized except by the Ministry of Munitions, for whom they did welfare work. They were finally designated the " Women's Auxiliary Force " and are at present carrying on very valuable preventive work under a special scheme.

Towards the end of 1919 a great effort was made by workers connected with the Young Men's Christian Association and other agencies to protect soldiers and sailors on leave, and demobilized men from the temptations of the streets.[1] Workers were based on Waterloo and Victoria stations, and eventually at least eight bureaux were founded in London. It was soon found that it was impossible to deal with the men alone. The nature of the work brought the patrols very closely into touch with the girls and women, and gave them the closest possible insight into their characters and their difficulties. This work was carried on for some years after the end of the war,

[1] The reader is referred to two most illuminating and human documents—reports of some of these activities—included in the Appendices to the London County Council Report, Number 2095, entitled, *Report by the Medical Officer of Health on the Venereal Diseases Scheme*, issued in 1922.

gradually changing its nature, until its primary objective became that of saving the girls from their life on the streets. The difficulties encountered were enormous but the results were more than splendid. In the Waterloo district alone, during the year 1919, the patrols persuaded over 3,700 men to leave the women with whom they were associated, while during nine months of 1920, it is estimated that in the same district 100 girls were influenced to abandon the life of the streets, 116 were taken to hospital for treatment for venereal disease, 104 were provided with lodgings, and 71 were established in honest employment. These few figures, taken from the Report referred to in the footnote, will give the general reader some idea of the good that may be done by two enthusiastic and efficient workers in one district alone.

Such facts, which are only picked at random from a mass of equally striking statistics, tend immeasurably to strengthen the case which can be made out for a considerable increase in outside patrol work.

Before, however, any great increase is made in the number of street workers, it would be absolutely essential that a strong organization should be constructed to back up that work. One of the most awkward and constantly recurring problems met with is that of the immediate disposal of a girl who responds to the appeal of a worker and agrees to abandon a life of wrongdoing. If she is found on the point of entering an hotel with a man, although she may not have a penny in her pocket, she is at least sure of a night's lodging. If the patrol worker cannot even offer her a bed for the night the girl is likely to slip through her hands again, thinking that this must be a poor thing which is being offered her in exchange for the evil which she at least knows. And that bed, under the present conditions of loose organization, is often as elusive as a will-o'-the-wisp. It is late at

night—often one or two a.m.—many of the Rescue Homes are not on the telephone, and those that are will usually be full at this hour. Others will not accept emergency cases, or those that would do so discover at the last minute that the presence of venereal disease, pregnancy, a verminous head, or some other disqualification forbids them, under their rules, to admit the girl. The upshot is often a weary night-tramp for the worker and the girl in search of the vacant bed that exists somewhere if only it can be found. The inevitable result is the waste of the valuable time of the former and a wearing out of the newly-acquired virtuous aspirations of the latter in the face of a welcome to her new mode of life—" as cold as charity."

If the girl is sent to a Common Lodging House and made to promise that she will return the next day the issue is gravely endangered; she is quite likely to meet and talk with a confirmed prostitute, who will paint for her an unattractive picture of life at a Rescue Home (in some few cases unhappily only too well justified), and so repentance and good intentions evaporate with the new day and the patrol worker probably will never see her charge again.

But the first night's lodging, vitally important as it often is, is only the beginning. Provision must be made for the girl to pass through all the stages of reclamation; she needs, first, motherly care and sympathy; she may need a hospital and a long course of treatment; she needs strengthening and confirming in her resolve, training for honest employment, a chance of the employment itself, and, finally, in many cases, long years of after-care watchfulness. In fact, if success is to be achieved, the complete machinery of the work of rescue must be in place, well oiled and in perfect working order, waiting for the patrol worker to close the starting-switch within a few minutes of that chance meeting on the street. At the

present moment the parts of that machine, in various stages of completion, are lying about all over London, waiting for a co-ordinating body to pick them up and fit them together, while the patrol workers are doing the best they can—and a very good best it is—with such tools as come to their hands.

Venereal Disease

The diseases coming under this heading, and variously referred to as " social disease," " the hidden plague," " the French evil," etc., comprise a factor very materially increasing the difficulties of rescue work. Girls and women who find themselves infected with venereal disease in addition to their other embarrassments are indeed in a pitiable plight. A girl who is to some extent mentally deficient, the mother—or about to become the mother—of an illegitimate child, deserted by her lover, penniless and disowned by her friends, does not need the additional burden of this disease to draw her down into the lowest depths of the Maelstrom : she is there already. And yet, in some cases, even this is added also, and one case comes to the mind of the writer of a girl, who was an epileptic, and in addition to most of the above afflictions, had been the subject of criminal proceedings for the murder of her baby. Surely as desperate a state of affairs as can well be imagined—and there was not a Home in London at the time where the rules permitted her reception.

It is among cases afflicted with venereal disease that the worker is likely to meet with girls and women in the most desperate situations to which immoral courses can lead.

Regarding the prevalence of these diseases among women in London no definite statement can be made

by the writer, since the scope of his inquiry did not extend to a full analysis of the position. It is safe, however, to state that any man who associates with a woman of the streets undoubtedly runs a very grave risk of contracting infection. This does not by any means imply that the regular prostitute is more likely than other girls to be infected: rather is the converse the case. This type of woman of necessity learns how to protect herself and, although she may have received infection once, she takes very good care afterwards to employ preventive precautions. Many regular prostitutes undoubtedly are infected and take no measures to rid themselves of the plague until it becomes serious; but the danger chiefly arises among those occasional prostitutes, or "amateurs"—shop girls, waitresses, etc.—who go on the streets periodically to augment their regular—or *irregular*—wages; there are also the very young girls, and those who resort to immoral courses, not for purposes of gain, but of free will, for the indulgence of their emotions. These less professional types probably include a high proportion of girls infected with both syphilis and gonorrhœa. The incidence varies enormously according to the type considered and the district.

There are some observers who declare that the diseases have shown a marked increase in prevalence of recent years, and that they are still gaining ground. Such opinion must be received with caution, since there are several indeterminate factors entering into the problem. It is only recently that the diseases have been more openly recognized and extensive official campaigns have been instituted with the object of making treatment facilities more easily available and distributing information as to where advice and help can be obtained, together with warnings as to the grave dangers of neglect. This action of the authorities cannot have failed to affect the number of cases applying for treatment, but an increase in the

statistics referring to these does not by any means denote an increase in the prevalence of the diseases; it may merely mean that some of the submerged cases, which before were treated by home specifics, by unqualified practitioners, or not at all, have been lifted into daylight. Venereal disease has rightly been called the "hidden plague," and, so far as reliable statistics are concerned, it appears likely that even its approximate dimensions may remain obscured for some time to come. The figures available relative to the attendance at clinics suggest that the diseases are now abating to a considerable extent.

The provision for dealing with venereal disease available at the Voluntary Homes has been noted already. It is not very large, and the efforts made to treat really serious cases are insignificant. This is as it should be, since the work of these Homes is not hospital work; it is more concerned with the development of character, and the guarding of the individual from spiritual dangers than with the care of the physically afflicted. Certain notable exceptions there are, as, for example, the Home for young children afflicted with venereal disease to which we referred in a previous chapter, but the treatment of these diseases, at least in their more acute stages, falls more naturally within the province of the hospitals, hospital clinics and Poor Law Infirmaries.

There are at present many obstacles in the way of the satisfactory handling of known or suspected cases of venereal disease. Women who are in the hands of rescue workers and being helped in other ways are usually found to be amenable to the suggestion that they should be medically examined, particularly when it is pointed out to them that the conditions of admission to a Home demand it; medical examination, however, cannot be enforced: there are certain objections to the proposal that compulsory examination should be sanctioned by law, as there are also to the

proposal to include gonorrhœa and syphilis in the category of notifiable diseases. Many women do not apply for advice or treatment until their condition has become very serious.

There are several very debatable points in connection with these diseases around which a pitched battle is continuously being waged by experts. These points should be mentioned here, but the writer does not venture to express any opinion as to the relative merits of the different policies advocated. The advisability of permitting or encouraging the dissemination of knowledge as to how venereal infection may be avoided by the use of certain prophylactics is a point also eagerly debated, but the issue here appears to be quite clear. It is exactly parallel to that problem raised by the spread of birth-control knowledge, and, with this, it is dealt with more fully in a later chapter under the heading of causative influences.

The question as to whether some pressure should be exerted by law to ensure that cases which have submitted to medical treatment shall continue that treatment until rendered non-infectious is an important one. There seem to be few valid objections to such a regulation, the most obvious being, perhaps, that it would be very difficult to enforce. The present state of things is certainly unsatisfactory. There is nothing to prevent a girl who has entered a hospital in a dangerously diseased condition collecting her belongings and walking out as soon as the more distressing symptoms have abated, and this actually happens in some cases. Those also who are treated at clinics are apt to abandon their attendance at the same stage, imagining that they are cured: such is usually by no means the case and, although the medical standard which is considered as a cure by the clinics is a very high one, some of those who relinquish the treatment before obtaining a clean bill must certainly continue to spread the infection. Some street girls are known

to ply their trade even while they are under treatment at a clinic.

The remedial work done at the clinics is invaluable,[1] and they are visited by members of all classes of society from the almost destitute to those who drive up in their own luxurious cars.

In addition to the treatment centres regulated by authority there is, of course, a considerable amount of treatment undertaken by medical men privately. Many patients hesitate to apply at a clinic for fear that they will there meet someone known to them, and therefore prefer to consult a doctor privately. A few private practitioners specialize in the treatment of these dangerous diseases, but those who do not make a special study of them are not always in possession of the most recently acquired knowledge on the subject or familiar with the most up-to-date and successful methods of treatment.

A very great deal of evil is done by those entirely unqualified "quacks," or individuals with a very incomplete knowledge of their subject—low-grade chemists, barbers and others—usually of foreign extraction—who profess to cure venereal disease. These people practise clandestinely and in fear of the law, but they often have a very large clientèle in certain districts. In the Whitechapel and Limehouse areas, where the conditions are bad and the incidence of venereal disease probably greater than in any other quarter of London, a number of these charlatans flourish—Russians, Poles, Jews, etc. They either

[1] Those interested in the methods of administration at the clinics, and in the problems of venereal disease generally are referred for more detailed information to the London County Council Report of 1922—*Report by the Medical Officer of Health on the Venereal Diseases Scheme*, to the Ministry of Health *Report of the Committee of Inquiry on Venereal Disease*, and to the various reports of the *National Council for Combating Venereal Disease* and the *Society for the Prevention of Venereal Disease*.

employ specifics of their own, which may or may not do either harm or good, or some proprietary remedy, which is usually innocuous and often useless. They probably effect a number of real or supposed cures, and often gain a great reputation in their district, being looked upon by the ignorant as public benefactors.

In concluding the present superficial account of some of the aspects of the question of social disease, stress should perhaps be laid upon the fact that, in spite of the wide prevalence of syphilis and gonorrhœa, the ignorance displayed by sufferers as to the nature of these diseases, particularly by the uneducated classes, is found to be astounding. It is not generally realized that both gonorrhœa and syphilis are both very dangerous diseases and that, if remedial measures are not taken in time, the most serious after-effects may follow; that syphilis, for example, is a frequent predisposing cause of fatal nervous diseases such as locomotor ataxia and general paralysis of the insane, and may also be hereditary, giving rise to insanity, deficiencies of sight or hearing and physical malformations. Gonorrhœa is probably regarded generally as a comparatively mild affection, and it is not usually realized that it may also set up grave secondary troubles or hereditary defects. This ignorance leads at times to the most amazing acts of folly; cases have been known where unmarried girls, pregnant, and afflicted with venereal disease, have remained on the streets and continued to ply their trade, until within actually a fortnight of the time of their confinement.

There is a most dangerous superstition among the more ignorant that venereal disease may be purged from the system if the woman affected gives birth to a child, and a belief is also current to the effect that a sufferer will be cured if he or she can succeed in infecting another person. These superstitions are credited, and acted upon, to-day in London.

Although there may be good grounds for the

argument that a spread of knowledge of the most successful methods of prophylaxis may have undesirable ethical effects, there can surely be only one opinion as to the urgency of the need for disseminating warnings as to the true nature of these very dangerous diseases, in order that the community at large, and in particular those innocent women and children who are often victims, may to this extent be safeguarded.

PART III

THE DANGER CURRENTS: AN ANALYSIS OF CAUSE

CHAPTER XIII

CIRCUMSTANTIAL CAUSES

Twelve potent causes: (1) *Predisposition.* (2) *Financial need.* (3) *Ignorance—a debatable question*—wrong *knowledge—how acquired—silence at schools and of parents.* (4) *Bad housing—operates in two ways.* (5) *Bad upbringing — parents often responsible.* (6) *Betrayal under promise of marriage.* (7) *Loneliness and monotony—undesirable acquaintanceships —monotony of life and work—the natural reaction —the demand for sensation—a deplorable instance.* (8) *Suggestive influences—bad literature—the Press—sensational films—unpleasant shops—certain undesirable agencies—conditions in public places.* (9) *Drink and drug-taking—an occasional cause—methylated spirit drinking—drugs.* (10) *Birth-control knowledge—bad and good aspects of—abortionists.* (11) *Lack of religious convictions—the attitude of youth towards religion—the demand for* facts. (12) *Growing spirit of indiscipline and independent thought—a natural and hopeful sign of evolution—Self-determination—other causes—marriage difficulties, " dual moral standard " — the white slave traffic — dangers of abduction — procurers and pimps.*

THERE are, as we have suggested earlier, many dangerous currents of different kinds which together make up the main stream which sweeps towards the maelstrom of moral degradation. Some of these currents are obvious upon a cursory examination of the subject; others are concealed and of a more subtle nature.

The basic and most potent underlying cause of wrongdoing is variously referred to by rescue workers as " original sin," " the old Adam (or Eve)," or the

"urge of sex," and accepted as an inevitable evil to be combated. The writer believes that the manifold nature of this all-important cause has begun to be realized only very recently and in a few places; that to regard it as an evil or an enemy is the greatest possible mistake; that to gain a deeper understanding of it is to see its significance in a very different and far more hopeful light. He proposes to treat of the various aspects of this subject separately in the following chapter, first disposing of the more obvious circumstances which seem to have important causative influences upon the problem.

The chief causes to which rescue workers as a whole appear to attribute undesirable moral conditions may be set out—without reference to the order of their estimated importance—as follows, nearly all of them applying to men as well as to women:

1. Emotional or mental unbalance, or inherent predisposition, sometimes traceable to heredity.
2. Straitened financial circumstances.
3. Ignorance, or wrong knowledge, and curiosity.
4. Bad housing conditions.
5. Evil influences of upbringing, or immoral associates in early life.
6. Betrayal under promise of marriage.
7. Loneliness and monotony, coupled with a natural desire for excitement; lack of suitable recreation.
8. Various suggestive influences.
9. Drink, or drug-taking.
10. The spread of birth-control knowledge.
11. Absence of any religious belief.
12. A recent lowering of moral standards, possibly as a result of war conditions: the widespread intolerance of discipline or self-discipline.

The above causes are merely stated baldly; each requires some qualification and has more than one

aspect. Those given above, and some others, will repay closer examination; most of them apply to both sexes equally.

1. Inherent predisposition towards wrongdoing may, as we have seen, be a mental phenomenon, and this is, unfortunately, an all too common factor affecting the position. In its less severe manifestations it probably accounts for most of the conditions where the sex-impulse is found to be unduly stressed. Here we are on treacherous ground, however, and we must not lose sight of the fact that the very continuance of the human race depends upon a sufficient sex element being present in the individual; the line of demarcation of the "normal" in this particular has not yet been, and probably never will be, defined.

It is perhaps safe to state that, in both sexes, obvious mental instability or lack of control, however acquired, accounts for much of the trouble, and that insistent desires in apparently normal but weak characters, *coupled with the lack of opportunity to satisfy these natural emotions legitimately*, accounts for a very great deal more. We are here verging very closely upon the "underlying cause" referred to above.

2. There is no doubt whatever that financial need or insecurity is a powerful contributing cause of immorality among women. A girl who is attempting to earn her own living in poorly paid employment is usually surrounded by others in similar circumstances and a proportion of these will often set her an unfortunate example; moreover, in many businesses, girls are closely associated with men, either as customers, colleagues or employers, and the lack of sufficient money may thus be paralleled both by the active example and the opportunity to obtain it in an irregular manner. It must be remembered also that men will often offer attractive sums for the woman's degradation.

In addition to those who are regularly employed for insufficient wages there are many who are engaged in various seasonal occupations which leave them unemployed for long periods. These are often forced to choose between semi-starvation and an irregular life. Some suitable scheme of insurance would be a boon to these women.

Parallel with the position of those who are actually insufficiently paid for the necessities of bare existence is that of others who are able to provide themselves with lodging, clothes and sufficient food, but find no surplus in their budget to allow for reasonable luxuries; there are others also whose desire for luxuries goes beyond what might be considered reasonable. In both cases the temptation is great to obtain money, or the things desired "in kind"—dress, sweets, theatres, dances, etc.—by the easiest means. Probably by far the greater amount of the money thus acquired is spent on dress. Many girls also are now unable to command the high wages which they obtained during the war, and having become accustomed to a certain style of living, they attempt to regain it by illegitimate means.

3. The opinion of experts is found to be very much divided upon the question as to how far ignorance of matters of sex plays a part in the downfall of girls and women. Some workers state that girls are very often ignorant of these matters; others declare that such ignorance is seldom found, and confidently assert that "the girl of fourteen to-day knows more of the facts of life than her grandmother knew at sixty." The truth of the matter seems to lie as usual between the two extremes.

Ignorance of sex matters certainly prevails amongst a proportion of girls of a certain type—either very young girls, country girls, or those girls of the better-class families who have led very sheltered lives.

But, whatever may be the extent of such ignorance,

and the damage accruing therefrom, it is quite certain that *wrong knowledge*, which is far more dangerous than ignorance, is responsible for a very great deal of misery. This also applies to both sexes.

A very large proportion of young men and women in all grades of society receive no proper instruction in the facts of life, either from their parents or at school.[1] Even at the best public schools a boy of fourteen or fifteen, who arrives at a house having received no previous enlightenment from the head-master of his private school, is not always instructed by his house-master either—and this in spite of the special moral dangers which undoubtedly beset a boy of this age at school. The most he is likely to hear on the subject officially is a number of exceedingly vague warnings from the pulpit, or nebulous references of a similar kind included in what he would describe as a " pi-jaw " from one or other of his masters. The chief result of these indefinite references to sex matters is probably the arousing of his curiosity. Before he has been long at school he realizes that there exist among the elder of his fellows secrets which he does not share. He hears vague and often ribald references to matters that are dark to him, and his ignorance is sometimes the subject of veiled jests among the others. This makes him feel acutely uncomfortable. He is also aware at this time of unfamiliar developments in his own physiology.

If the boy be of a sensitive nature the last thing that he will think of doing, in view of the manner in which the subject is presented to him, will be to seek enlightenment openly. He feels that his ignorance is something to be ashamed of; he will probably pretend to knowledge which he does not possess, and proceed to find out what all the mystery is about in his own way; he may in time gain a very accurate idea of the

[1] " Systematic or general instruction has developed as yet nowhere in Europe."—*Prostitution in Europe*, p. 53.

facts by paying keen attention to what is said and applying synthetic and deductive reasoning to the fragments which he stores up in his brain. In any case the angle of view from which he approaches an understanding of the sacred creative function of sex is apt to be a deplorably sordid one.

In some large schools it is the custom for each innocent boy, soon after his arrival, to be "taught" these matters by an older boy duly appointed by the head of the house; whether this plan gives satisfactory results or not will depend upon the character of the youthful instructor and the general tone of the house: at least there is a grave risk.

If these conditions prevail—and they certainly do prevail—in the best boys' schools in the land, it seems to be high time that a determined effort were made to ensure the adoption of better methods in schools of every grade, and the possibilities will be considered in a later chapter.

There can be no doubt whatever that this casual treatment of the all-important matter of sex-enlightenment, and the resultant undesirable consequences, are powerful factors tending to induce loose morality amongst young men; moreover, there is, in addition to the evil fostered by this negative attitude, a loss of an opportunity of the highest value for the inculcation of desirable tendencies of a positive nature. The writer cannot speak with the same authority as regards the conditions prevailing in large schools for girls, but he has good reason for suggesting that the position will be found to be at least quite as unsatisfactory.

Considering again girls of the types found at the Voluntary Homes, there can be no doubt that, although the majority of them learn the facts of life at an early age, they are by no means well informed as to the grave dangers of various kinds into which an irregular life may lead them.

Ignorance of sex truths, then—and, in particular, knowledge wrongly acquired—must be regarded as important causes tending towards ill-doing, and the neglect of efficient instruction is to be lamented as representing the wasteful abandonment of a powerful instrument for the encouragement of well-doing, and for the acquisition by the young of a better-balanced, saner and cleaner outlook.

4. Evil housing conditions must be reckoned with as lying at the root of many undesirable tendencies. They seem to operate in two important ways. In the first place there are, in London and other large towns, areas of congestion where it is a fairly common thing for a family, or even several families, to be found occupying one room. There may be adults and children of all ages living and sleeping within the compass of four walls. There is no reason for dwelling upon such a state of things; the realization may be left to the imagination of the reader. The most terrible aspect, of course, is that there is absolutely no personal privacy for any individual; all things which are said and done within those four walls may be heard and seen by every man, woman and child present.

Living conditions of this kind produce a deadening of sensibility in the children who grow up in such surroundings; they must undoubtedly be held responsible also for many of the cases of child assault and incest which are brought to light every year. For a girl to have a child by her father or brother is in some districts regarded rather as a humorous misfortune than as a sin against human and divine law.

The second manner in which overcrowded living conditions operate as a cause of wrongdoing applies more obviously to women than to men. A girl brought up amongst surroundings such as we have described cannot have the faintest conception of the meaning of a true home or the amenities of home life. It is,

therefore, almost impossible for her to form the ambition to possess a home of her own. Home, to her, often appears as a dismal and miserable place from which she prefers to escape as often and for as long as possible. Thus the home-building instinct—to a woman one of the most powerful incentives to run a straight course—is either withheld from her vision entirely, or smothered at its first vague birth in her imagination.

It is more than satisfactory to reflect that the living conditions referred to here, and more particularly described in our first chapter, are being eliminated gradually in London by the untiring efforts of the responsible authorities. Much work yet remains to be done; it cannot be carried out with such precipitate haste as some of the more hot-headed of social reformers of to-day, in their ignorance, imagine; the new structure must be well-designed, and designed for permanence.

5. Bad conditions of upbringing are found in other surroundings than where they are primarily associated with overcrowded housing conditions. Parents may be immoral, or merely neglectful, allowing their children to associate at an early age with immoral persons. Some parents actively abet their children in immorality, encouraging them to earn a few coppers by permitting undesirable familiarities from strangers whom they meet in public places. The tender ages of some of these children comes as a shock to the inquirer. It is small wonder if, from such beginnings, they develop later into avowed prostitutes. It is stated that during the past few years an increase has been noticeable in immorality among children of twelve to sixteen years.

At a riper age also girls undoubtedly meet with similar encouragement; if a girl asks for money or clothes the mother or father will hint to her that her needs are a matter of considerable expense, that she

has an easy means of gaining money, and that there is no reason why the family should not benefit thereby. Happily, parents of this quality are comparatively rare, but it is quite certain that they do exist here and there, and a number of girls received at the Rescue Homes owe their downfall originally to this cause.

6. There is no doubt that many girls are betrayed, under promise of marriage, by men to whom they consider themselves betrothed. As soon as it becomes evident that the girl is to have a baby the man—sometimes a married man—disappears from the scene and leaves the unfortunate girl to face her trouble alone. Many girls with histories of this kind are received at the Voluntary Homes during the course of a year. Some superintendents and matrons complain that the modern girl is too trustful, and does not trouble to verify the statements of the man who is paying her attention. This, if it be true, may prove unfortunate, but it can scarcely be considered as a flaw in the girl's character that she credits her men friends with truthfulness unless she is given reason to doubt them.

7. It has been said that no place can be so lonely as the middle of a crowd, and it is true that, to those who have no friends in London and no opportunity of making friends, the Metropolis, for all its millions of humanity, can be one of the loneliest places in the world.

A loneliness of this kind is probably responsible for the initial stages of the downfall of many a girl attempting to live an independent life in London. The domestic servant up from the country, and the business girl who has no friends of the opposite sex, may have a very strong natural desire for companionship of the best kind. In fact, as one matron, when discussing causes of wrongdoing, sadly exclaimed, "The trouble nowadays is that every girl thinks that she must have a 'boy,'" which seems to the writer not such an unnatural or sinful wish as the good lady

appeared to consider it. If a girl would fulfil her desire for male companionship she is often obliged to seek her friends among chance acquaintances—"picked up," as the popular idiom has it—with whom she may get into conversation in the street, in shops, trains, restaurants, or at railway stations or elsewhere. Such chance acquaintanceships need not necessarily be harmful except that the circumstances of their beginning tend to shape them wrongly. In the first place there is a furtive atmosphere thrown over the whole relationship. A man who will make the acquaintance of a girl in this way is often seeking for an illicit relationship and thinks that a girl who will respond to his advances may be willing to co-operate with him, even if he does not set her down at once in his mind as a girl of loose morals. The girl also probably suspects this at the outset. The respect of each for the other is lowered, or at least endangered. If either or both are by nature inclined to give way to emotional promptings, which are thus brought to the threshold of their attention, the way is made easy for them to an extent which would never have accompanied a meeting in the ordinary way in an atmosphere of mutual respect.

Coupled with loneliness and lack of companionship we must consider monotony of work, or of existence generally, as an important exciting cause, and this implies also a lack of suitable recreation or secondary interests. Some factory occupations are certainly of a very monotonous nature, but the factory girl at least has her spare time free, and may be able to use it advantageously; she also meets many girls of her own class and makes friends. The monotony of existence in domestic service, or other "living-in" occupations is probably more trying. It is stated that some domestic servants are very badly and inconsiderately treated by their employers. This statement, unqualified, would be violently challenged by employers of

those better-class domestic servants, who demand, and obtain as a matter of course, concessions which a previous generation would have regarded as sheer luxuries. Domestic service, however, includes very many different grades of employment and it is undoubtedly true that, in such places as obscure private hotels and boarding-houses and elsewhere, the domestic drudge, or " general," leads a very unenviable life. English girls employed by foreign families in the East End of London are said often to be treated with particular meanness and lack of consideration.

Monotony of existence such as we are considering is not unlikely, by a psychological reaction, to beget periodically in man or woman an almost desperate craving for an unaccustomed experience or excitement of some kind. This insistent demand for a " fling " undoubtedly arises at times and, owing to lack of a legitimate safety-valve, often leads to trouble.

The lives of a large proportion of town-dwellers are over-shadowed by a terrible sameness which more and more affects the character of the individual. Their habits become more and more sheep-like in every way. The clerk who leaves his suburban home in the morning and returns to it at night, completing a fixed intermediate daily routine until the days and weeks and months and years merge into a lifetime is one of the most unenviable victims of this smothering cobweb of monotony which men and women inevitably spin around themselves when they swarm together in great cities. Probably every office worker possessed of any individuality at all has at times experienced an inward rebellion against the life of the crowd and the tasks of the crowd and everything to do with the crowd that hems him in and limits his freedom at every turn. Afterwards follows a realization of the strength of the ties by which the crowd-life holds him down, and of those compensating advantages which only the crowd-life has to offer—and so he becomes resigned to another

spell of monotony. Some few break away and carve out their own fortunes apart from the mass; many more " break out " for a short semi-delirious period of irresponsible liberty; others break down. It is this " breaking-out " which may be the cause of much trouble among girl workers as well as men. The effect of this soul-killing sameness may also be to divert the attention strongly towards the newest sensation of the moment, and the habit of obtaining thrills " second-hand " in this way appears, assisted by the Press, to become more firmly ingrained in the multitude every year.

In this connection it may be worth while to take note of one of the most disgusting exhibitions of morbidity which has been displayed in recent years, following upon a notorious crime. So bad was it that even the Press—not usually squeamish—exhibits a tone of mild censure of the participants, although the Excise Authorities and the Police were apparently willing or—let us hope—constrained by regulation, to condone it.

The following account appeared in a daily paper of July 26th, 1924, under the caption, " Paying to See House of Death," and other headlines, which are omitted :

> " Paying a shilling a head, of which 2d. is deducted for entertainment tax, between 500 and 1,000 morbid sightseers have been daily visiting the bungalow where Miss . . . was killed.
>
> " Outside the place is like a fair, with raucous vendors of ice-cream and sticks of sweet ' rock ' stamped ' Crumbles Bungalow Rock,' bawling their wares.
>
> " Chars-à-bancs are constantly conveying heavy loads of passengers to and from the bungalow, issuing special cheap return tickets for 1s. 6d. from Eastbourne.

"Since last Monday, when the charge for admission was imposed for the first time, ten people have passed through the rooms every five minutes of each day. Frequently there is a queue of 300 waiting to get in.

Chocolates Exhibit

"A man who acts as guide gives a graphic recital of the details of the crime.

"The tour includes an exhibition of the box of chocolates left by Miss . . . 'exactly as left, untouched.'

"'I decided to open the bungalow,' the owner told the *Daily* —— yesterday, 'because of the disgusting scenes which occurred last week.'

"'Crowds of hundreds threatened to break in if they were not allowed to enter. They broke into the garden and trampled everything to smithereens. . . .'

"The consent of the Excise Authorities to the issuing of entertainment tax tickets has been obtained by the owner, and the police have offered no objection."

What can be said of the mentality of a person who will travel and pay one shilling to see, amongst other things, a box of chocolates "exactly as left, untouched" by the unfortunate victim of a horrible crime, involved, as this was, in a particularly nauseating atmosphere of sordid impurity?

And what of the mental condition of the tradesman who conceives the brilliant plan of selling sweets stamped with the name of the house of tragedy? For this novelty was purchased by the visiting crowd of mental degenerates, and, mayhap, given to their children to suck, that they might thus pleasantly

absorb the emotional tastes of their parents. Surely some element of the mind, or the soul itself, must have been twisted very badly awry to make this thing possible? If so, then one insidious and powerful warping tendency can be found in the evil we are considering—the lacking in many lives of healthy stimulating incident or variation—blank, relentless monotony.

The same phenomenon that appears as a reaction from under-stimulation is probably caused also, of course, in a smaller number of shallow natures, by the opposite cause of over-stimulation—the continual crying-out for " some new thing."

In the instance quoted above the victims of monotony appear in their thousands, at the bungalow, taking their spiritual drug openly and—to our national shame—for all the world to see. It is not to be forgotten, however, that others, driven by this same monotony to seek relief, turn readily, but not so openly, to that powerful excitement which sex adventuring ever offers.

8. There are at present active many powerful influences tending to encourage vicious thoughts in those whose minds are naturally predisposed in such directions, and also to awaken such thoughts in others.

The most potent of these suggestive influences are probably :

(*a*) Bad literature, including certain newspapers with large circulations.
(*b*) Foolish and sensational—but not necessarily immoral—cinema films.
(*c*) Unpleasant shops, displaying their wares publicly.
(*d*) The advertisements and activities of those agencies which make a business of finding " friends " for " lonely " people.
(*e*) The conditions often to be observed in the parks and open spaces.

These causes are sufficiently important to warrant closer examination.

(*a*) Bad literature may conveniently be divided into two main classes—first, obscene and sensational stories, etc., which are written with the sole object of finding a sale among persons of prurient mind, together with pernicious photographs and illustrations; secondly, the daily (and Sunday) Press which, with a few notable exceptions, seems to provide sensational matter with a very similar purpose, the chief differences being, firstly, that the matter is usually sensational rather than salacious in character, being presented presumably for the delectation of ill-balanced minds, and secondly that these papers often contain quite a fair proportion of other matter also.

The writer does not propose here to enter into a general diatribe against the " yellow " sections of the Press, which section unfortunately includes many papers with large circulations. The direct and indirect effect of these papers upon the moral problem is, however, undoubtedly so great that we are obliged carefully to consider them here strictly from our special point of view.

It is an interesting question as to how far this presentation of sensational matter is a pandering to a sordid and morbid taste already existent, and how far such interests are fostered and cultivated by the Press, with the knowledge that, whatever else may be lacking, there will usually be a divorce case, a murder, or other exciting or tragic happening which can be worked up to appeal to the public and swell the circulation of the papers. The Press is largely to blame, but not altogether : the evil has always existed. Proof of the love of the morbid and sensational ingrained in the people can be seen almost any day; nowhere is it more in evidence than at a funeral in a poor quarter. Where the Press certainly does fail, and fail badly, is in making no attempt to utilize

its unparalleled opportunities for counteracting these unhealthy tendencies. It may be thought that the matter has very little to do with our subject; the connection is closer than may at first sight appear. Morbid sentimentality and sensationalism of this kind on the one hand, and the tendency towards wrong-doing for the sake of excitement on the other, are probably parallel effects of the common cause already considered—monotony. Multitudes of men and women continue to endure their colourless lives, and it would seem most reasonable to conclude that, being deprived of stimulating incident such as flavours a life of varied action, they snatch avidly at the second-hand stimulation which can be obtained by dwelling on highly-flavoured descriptions of murders, divorces and outrages, which at times actually comprise the greater part of the reading matter of most of our daily papers and some Sunday periodicals. Young and partly educated youths and girls as well as older people devour these detailed descriptions, emotional letters and intimate revelations of divorce cases, which are no concern whatever of the world in general. Instead of experiencing disgust, and feeling rather as if they had been listening at a keyhole, they accept as a matter of course that which has attained the assumed dignity and authenticity of print—always, for some obscure reason, a recommendation to the uneducated—and proceed to discuss and compare individual cases. Thus are these matters divested in the eyes of some readers of all due reserve and modesty of approach, and brought within the focus of their vision as things which, of course, might easily happen to anyone—themselves included—without any loss of self-respect. And thus, by publishing these sensational stories, habitually selecting for prominence the most objectionable features, and *without any adverse comment upon undesirable conduct*, does the Press, as a suggestive influence, work far-reaching and incalculable harm.

The literature which is produced solely for sale to the salacious minded is, fortunately, subjected to very strict control. A number of semi-indecent and suggestive periodicals are allowed to flourish, and books of a similar nature are published; among the latter a proportion of definitely salacious publications filter through clandestinely into the hands of those who seek such things. Most of the indecent publications of this kind originate from abroad, and their importation is controlled by a Department of the Home Office. The task of censoring this matter and adjudicating upon it is a very difficult one; those who complain of the existence of such literature in this country and are inclined to rail at the authorities for permitting its introduction would, if they knew all the facts, withhold their censure and be inclined instead to thank the powers that be that things are not a very great deal worse.

It cannot be forgotten in this connection also that a certain amount of the literature of to-day exhibits behind the mask and excuse of high art—and unchallengeable, therefore—a quite unnecessary indelicacy of expression or stressing and close analysis of indelicate situations. It is accepted, presumably, on a similar principle to that which, while rightly condemning the sale of postcards of the undraped human form, applauds the exhibition of a Venus in one of the public art galleries; the essential rightness of such a distinction would seem unquestionable, but, in the case of literature, the line of demarcation between art on the one hand, and frank pornography on the other, would not seem by any means so clear, or the rightness of the distinction so unchallengeable.

In addition to salacious literature there are also operating as suggestive causes of wrongdoing, indecent photographs and drawings. These commodities are advertised—usually under the guise of "life studies" appealing to artists—in papers and magazines of low

standard (including some periodicals which can only be described as of low standard from the very fact that they accept such advertisements). Some few firms advertising thus are undoubtedly genuine, but the genuine ones in their own interests naturally confine their advertising to papers devoted to the interests of artists. There can be no doubt that such things exercise a dangerous, suggestive influence amongst the impressionable and ill-controlled of the youth of both sexes and that evil is inseparable also from the conditions of their production.

(*b*) Cinematograph films, although on the whole carefully censored as regards their moral aspect, are often highly emotional in character, and sometimes suggestive. Girls in the Rescue Homes have declared that such films have at times reminded them of the circumstances of their own fall. There is also aroused in impressionable natures an inclination to imitate the conduct of a prominent character in a film, even although he, or she, may be taking the part of the "villain of the piece." On the other hand the cinematograph must be recognized and applauded, apart from all other considerations, as a valuable means for the legitimate and comparatively harmless gratification of that desire born of an intense reaction from monotony which we have already recognized—that craving for even a second-hand thrill to relieve the tedium of a flat and uneventful existence.

(*c*) Of similar nature to the influence of undesirable literature is that of those shops of an unpleasant type which are still permitted to display publicly remedies and appliances of a certain kind. Doubtful literature and photographs, etc., are very usually sold at these places also. Such displays can but have the effect of arousing curiosity in the minds of uninstructed youth and childhood, while at the same time supplying the means for enlightenment *from a wrong angle*. Their suggestive influence is undoubtedly most damaging.

(*d*) The advertisements of those agencies which offer to introduce "cheerful friends" of the opposite sex to lonely persons would undoubtedly repay closer investigation. In some cases these introductions are quite straightforward and genuine, but there is often an undesirable undercurrent to be discovered in the activities of these agencies.

(*e*) A most powerful suggestive influence is provided by the conditions often to be observed in the parks and public places of the Metropolis, particularly in the late evening. They are an undeniable evil, but it is difficult to see how any great improvement can be brought about by official action without the risk of some annoyance, or even insult, being offered to quite innocent couples.

Here we may remark in passing that the problem presented to thousands of engaged, or about-to-be-engaged, couples in big cities as to where they may obtain that solitude which the circumstances demand, is an insistent and apparently insoluble one. The difficulty which they experience in finding secluded places in which to do their legitimate love-making is only equalled by the ingenuity displayed in attempting a solution: while this lack of privacy cannot perhaps be classed as a contributing cause of wrongdoing, it certainly does not tend to encourage legitimate courtship or to make the course of true love run any more smoothly.

Analogous to the suggestive influence of misconduct in parks and open spaces must be considered the conditions prevailing during the evening hours in certain streets, and the effect of direct or indirect solicitation by prostitutes. Such influences are undoubtedly damaging and undesirable; at the same time the very greatest caution should be observed in the application of any measures of repression. Enthusiastic but unenlightened ecclesiastical powers, acting with the best intentions in the world, can do—

and in the past have done—actual harm by influencing the authorities towards ill-considered action in respect of admittedly glaring evils of this kind which happened to have been brought to the ecclesiastical notice. With regard to the parade of prostitutes, whether in the streets or elsewhere, it must always be remembered that, in the present imperfect state of humanity, a certain minimum demand for this illicit traffic inevitably exists and, in spite of all difficulties which may be put in the way, *will be satisfied.* There is admittedly the strongest possible argument against stimulating the demand by recognizing and openly proffering the supply, as is done in some countries. Such conditions inevitably result in an increase both of demand and supply. Yet, if the demand and supply are to meet—and they inevitably will meet, in spite of all obstacles—surely it is better that the meeting should take place where the evil may be watched and controlled, than that ill-advised legislation should have the effect of driving the canker deeper into our social organism. There it will be a hidden sore indeed, but not eliminated, and far less easy of observation or palliation. If we act in this short-sighted fashion we may perhaps rub our ecclesiastical hands gleefully over the purity of our music-halls or the cleanness of our streets, or even commend them to the approbation of other nations as a measure of our national morality. But it will be a false measure, and we must at the same time carefully avoid penetrating below the surface, or we shall find that something ugly lurks still within.

The unfortunate state of our streets is undoubtedly an undesirable suggestive influence, dangerous to purity. We should attack the problem as soon as may be, but only when we have found out how to strike at the heart of the monster—lest we find ourselves obliged to be content with the cutting off of one of his many heads.

9. Drink is only in a minor degree a cause of wrongdoing. It may be, and far more often is, a concomitant effect, arising from lack of the power to inhibit unruly desires. As a cause it appears only in those cases where a girl who is unused to alcoholic liquors is induced to partake too freely, her condition then being taken advantage of by a man when her resistance to his advances is weakened. In this light alcohol appears as a common ally of the man who wishes to wrong a girl who eludes him; where the girl's resistance to temptation is not naturally strong it is usually employed with success. For this purpose it is not seldom used with certain drugs, and in this case the drink given may not be alcoholic at all, but something apparently harmless, such as lemonade.

The habit of chronic alcoholism is sometimes found among immoral women where it is either a parallel effect of weak character, is resorted to as a means of meeting men in public houses, as a temporary refuge from the miseries incident to the advanced stages of a life of prostitution or a remedy against ills which may be contracted from exposure in the streets in all kinds of weather. Women living the life of the streets are said to feel the need for stimulants. Many regular prostitutes, on the other hand, altogether avoid them.

The use of methylated spirit as a stimulant is an evil which must be noted here. This spirit is said to have a most exhilarating effect, which can be compared to that of cocaine. The spirit, which is so easily obtainable, is taken in its crude state by most of the poorer people addicted to this vice. There exists, however, a method of extracting the wood-naphtha and flavouring the spirit to resemble whisky: the conversion and sale of the spirit has become a flourishing trade amongst certain sections in the East End. The spirit is sometimes made more palatable by the addition of fruit-syrup or lemonade crystals. Such drinks are

frequently given to very young girls, who may thus easily acquire a taste for alcohol.

Occasional indulgence in alcoholic liquor in certain circumstances, then, is to be regarded as a cause of wrongdoing, while chronic alcoholism is not.

The taking of drugs alone is said by some workers to be very widespread and on the increase amongst the types of women we are considering. Laudanum, of course, has been largely used for many years amongst the poor, while the taking of " chlorodyne " is very prevalent, and this narcotic is easily obtained.

There is, unfortunately, no doubt that a whole book could be written upon the subject of drug-taking alone. The writer has not made any special investigation into the matter, and the above statements are only made here because they refer to factors which obtruded themselves during his inquiry, and evidently, therefore, have a bearing upon the main subject.

10. The recent spread among all classes of knowledge concerning various methods of birth-control is held by many people to exercise such a far-reaching influence upon wrongdoing as to constitute a definite cause in itself.

The advisability or otherwise of allowing and encouraging the spread of such knowledge is a very vexed question at the present time, and the writer does not propose here to attempt a comparison of the weighty arguments which can be adduced in support of each opposing view. The matter with which we are concerned here is to decide whether birth-control —the intelligent use of contraceptive knowledge— exercises a desirable influence or otherwise upon the problems connected with rescue work. The remarks which follow apply, therefore, solely to unions out of wedlock.

We have here a set of circumstances almost exactly parallel to those prevailing in connection with venereal disease and the use of preventatives thereof. There

can be no doubt that the access to contraceptive knowledge and appliances is in very many cases a direct incentive to acts of immoral union in just the same way as is the use of preventative drugs against venereal disease. In such cases the lack of the ability to apply such precautions, and the resultant fear of consequences, might act as sufficient deterrent to one or other, or both, of the intending participants.

It is not every nature, however, which is to be deterred by fear of consequences; indeed, the spice of an uncertain risk for some adds attractiveness to even so ignoble an adventure. There are very many women, on the other hand, to whom the fear of becoming pregnant out of wedlock, with the attendant shame and difficulties, is the strongest, if not the only, factor curbing their tendencies towards immorality; with men, in a similar manner, the fear of possible unpleasantness, and the incurring of serious responsibility, acts as a restraining force, as does also the fear of disease.

It would seem, therefore, that the dissemination of knowledge of the methods of preventing conception, or disease, may act as a cause aiding and abetting immoral unions, by largely removing the fear of consequences in either case.

It must be clearly recognized that restraint, arising solely from a fear of consequences, has, from an ethical point of view, no value whatever; strength of character and right-feeling supplying the only permanent and unfailing safeguards. For this reason, this misuse of birth-control or prophylactic knowledge is not ethically to be reckoned an evil on account of its removing a purely materialistic dread of consequences, but chiefly because the effect of this removal is a greatly increased familiarization with the undesirable act, and a consequent loosening of moral fibre.

Viewing the question from the social and civic, rather than the purely ethical standpoint, we shall

reach a different conclusion. A certain amount of the evil resultant from illicit relationship is, in any given community, in any given stage in its spiritual development, inevitable in spite of all restraining tendencies, whether of fear or otherwise. Given this, we as citizens are surely justified in arguing that any means that will tend harmlessly to reduce the number of undesired illegitimate births, or the spread of dangerous diseases, and the consequent charges upon the community in health and money, cannot be regarded as an evil but as a definite good.

As touching our problem alone, then, and taking no account of questions affecting wedlock, we must regard the increasing availability of both contraceptive and prophylactic knowledge and materials as ethically unsound but civically desirable.

A regulation prohibiting the supply of these articles except on the order of a medical practitioner might have good (ethical) results.

Allied to the questions of birth-control proper we find other facts demanding at least passing notice—the efforts of the abortionists.

There are, as most people are aware, persons of both sexes practising surreptitiously under various guises and offering, for a (usually considerable) payment, to relieve unmarried women or others by illegitimate means of the embarrassment of pregnancy. This sometimes involves an illegal operation; at other times the use of powerful drugs in the early stages of pregnancy is successful in upsetting the course of nature.

Some abortionists advertise in guarded fashion, the phrasing of their announcements often resembling the advertisements of ordinary medical homes; others drive a flourishing trade in certain districts and under various guises. We are not concerned with the practice of the abortionist *per se;* it is undoubtedly a most evil, and often very dangerous trade; the law

regards it very severely and imposes heavy penalties upon convicted persons.

The knowledge, however, of this possible method of escape—should all else fail—from the natural consequences of wrongdoing is, similarly to birth-control knowledge, an additional factor tending, before the event, to minimize the fear of conception.

11. There can be no doubt that, in the ultimate analysis, strength of character combined with knowledge is the sole unfailing shield against wrongdoing of every kind. Character is moulded by the contacts and events—the joys and griefs, successes and failures, fortunes and disasters—of daily life; it may take either an upward or a downward trend according to the reaction of the individual to such events. And, just as surely as strength of character is the only reliable safeguard against the evils we are considering, so is spiritual aspiration the only infallible guiding force that can turn and maintain the growth of character towards the higher rather than the lower potentialities. Material influences may for a time sway the individual in either direction, but a strong realization of the spiritual nature and destiny of humankind is the one sure stand-by in all perplexities.

Some people call this *realization*, with all its corollaries, by the very diversely applied—and misapplied—name of "religion," and in so doing, seriously mask its significance and limit the possible wealth of its interpretation.

Let it therefore be granted, as indeed most readers will readily agree, that "an aspiration towards the highest realization of the spiritual nature and destiny of mankind," which—shorn of all differences due to jealousy, or rival ecclesiastical politics—is the very narrowest definition of the true meaning of the word "religion" which the writer is prepared to accept, that such religious conviction is of undeniable value in the eradication of wrongdoing; then we shall find

another potent cause of evil in the widespread lack of such convictions found to exist particularly among the youth of to-day. It is a matter of statistics that, from year's end to year's end, eighty per cent. of the young people of to-day never enter a sanctuary of any kind; they have no ideal, no initial point from which to direct their conduct; the purchase of a lip-stick or a new tie or a wireless set is to them a matter of far greater import than the origin and destiny of their immortal souls. We shall shortly consider whether the responsibility for this state of things lies more with the young people concerned or with those whose trust it should be to present to the people religious facts in the manner most in accordance with their development and needs.

For the purposes of the present section we must accept as fact this undeniable lack of interest in religion; assuming that our argument above is soundly based, and that religion is a definite help in maintaining moral rectitude, we may, therefore, write down as one more powerful cause of wrongdoing the widespread modern lack of any religious conviction among the people, it being understood that the word "religious" is here used in its *widest possible* significance, and not as the monopoly of any particular cult or creed either of yesterday or to-day.

12. There appears to be abroad to-day a widespread and growing spirit of indiscipline, and this is thought by some workers largely to contribute towards the prevalence of wrongdoing and to have brought about an increase in moral laxity. To some extent this is attributed to the effects of the war and the emancipation, and freedom from parental or other restraint, which war conditions brought to the youth of both sexes. Rescue workers are inclined to lament that young people of to-day will not receive advice or submit to discipline as they used to. They complain that it is the modern habit for the young to assume

that they know what is right better than anyone else can tell them, that they claim absolute freedom to do as they will and obey the prompting of the desires of the moment. They are determined at all costs to "have a good time," leaving the future to take care of itself, both ignoring the counsel of those who speak of duties waiting to be done and questioning their right to interfere.

Now, in this spirit, which undoubtedly exists, the writer sees more of hope than despair. It is a spirit of self-determination—of realization by the individual of its present intellectual separateness from all others, of primary responsibility to itself alone—the submission to the judgment-seat of its own conscience of all its actions. It is, moreover, a reaction from, and glorious renunciation of, that sheep-like mentality of the crowd which we have deplored elsewhere. It represents the discovery by the individual sheep of a new force—the power to think and decide for itself. Like all new forces, whose powers are at first imperfectly understood, it has its dangers for rash or inexperienced hands. The individual sheep was formerly willing to accept without question the standards of right and wrong, of commendable and culpable conduct, as laid down by the appointed leaders. Having at last acquired the idea of independent decision as to whether arbitrary standards should be accepted, and as to what may or may not be done, he is at first inclined to yield to selfish promptings, to mistake the thing desired for the thing truly desirable, and stifle the tribunal of the conscience. Moreover, the newly-emancipated individual, while dimly realizing this primary responsibility to himself for all his actions, does not at first perceive that the ultimate responsibility is to a tribunal beyond mortal judgments. He hears the "still, small voice"—when he wills to listen—but he does not guess whence it arrives. Failing emotional enlightenment and revela-

tion—the religious conviction of the Way of Faith—it is only through the commission of grave errors and misjudgments, and the experience of the punishment that quite automatically follows each, that the individual begins to understand the divine prompting of the " still, small voice." Thus, associating his own judgment and mental processes of logical reasoning more and more with it, he ultimately approaches more nearly to the status of a god, " knowing good and evil," and making a right choice between them. The Way of Faith—the intuitive way—may also be called the Way of the Heart; that of experience is the Way of the Head; the latter is a more thorny path, but it leads to exactly the same illuminating view. The present is an intellectual age, becoming more so every year; for this reason, more and more people are avoiding or forsaking the Way of the Heart and asking to be shown the Way of the Head. In a later chapter we shall refer to this vitally important change in greater detail, and inquire to what extent those whose duty it is to guide the thoughts of the people in spiritual matters, are competent to deal with the new situation.

For the present we must admit that this stirring of independence certainly is, in its early stages, a danger and an additional source of trouble. But we must also surely agree that, while the blind and unquestioning acceptance and the religious observance of the most excellent dogmatic creed, together with a code of decent living, may be the best possible disposition for the spiritual welfare of a mentally undeveloped or stupid race of people, such a state of things is by no means calculated to assist the development of the thoughtful individual, but rather to repress it. Moreover, as the people develop, any dogma will inevitably be challenged in the cold, intellectual light of logic. It is not, therefore, as regards the intellectual type of mind, until after this questioning has arisen and been

satisfactorily answered, whether by exposition or experience, that a self-won and unassailable knowledge and a strong will to choose the right and eschew the wrong can be established.

For the above very good reasons, then, we should urge those workers who bemoan the waning of the old days of sheep-like and unquestioning obedience to look at the change in a more hopeful light. Let them try to see in this so-called " spirit of indiscipline " the birth of a new era of thought, the early and half-conscious stirrings amongst the once easily led of that faculty of *self-determination* of right and wrong which is as necessary to the intellectually developed human being as is the air of heaven to a creature which, by a long evolutionary process, has discarded gills for lungs. Let them face the new dangers with the old courage, guiding where before they would have driven, advising where they would have dictated; and, above all, let them not wish to confine again this questing and aspiring breath of clear thought within that dark place from which it is escaping.

Under the twelve headings above are set down the influences which may be regarded as the chief circumstantial causes of wrongdoing. A multitude of other minor causes probably operate also, exercising their special influence according to individual idiosyncrasy. Of these, a few may be mentioned here.

The writer is of opinion that a subtle and important causative influence, which is not usually directly traceable, and is, therefore, not included in the above list, is to be found in the great economic and other difficulties which in these days tend to prevent early marriages. Under present conditions of stern competition and an advanced scale of living a man is usually not in a position to support a wife at a reasonably early age, say at twenty-five, and, even at that age, he often can see before him no reasonable hope of being able to marry. He therefore sometimes

seeks in misalliances—whether of a semi-permanent or promiscuous nature—that complement to his manhood which he would naturally prefer to meet on a far higher plane. A similar state of things applies in a lesser degree to some women also.

It is suggested that women who may lead a virtuous life until past their first youth will sometimes adopt an irregular life when they consider that their chances of marriage are becoming slender. Some workers claim to have observed a critical age in the case of domestic servants between the ages of twenty-four and twenty-seven, at which an appreciable number who take to wrongdoing give this as their reason. The age of thirty has also been mentioned as critical from this point of view. The evidence in support of this theory is by no means conclusive, but there seems to be sufficient reason for remarking it here.

The wide acceptance of the " dual moral standard," or different code of morality for men and for women, is a matter into the intricacies of which the writer does not propose to enter in the present work. It is sufficient to state that this must also function as an influence tending to the persistence of wrongdoing, since it definitely countenances irregularity amongst men, and therefore necessarily presupposes the co-operation of women, albeit the latter are assumed to be of the submerged types only.

Parents of girls in trouble, who sanctimoniously refuse to help, or entirely disown, their own kith and kin, and allow themselves thus to be put under the heaviest possible, but often unrecognized, obligation to the complete strangers who do take pity on and help them, are also to be classed as a definite influence tending towards the persistence of wrongdoing. It is an interesting fact that the most highly " religious " or " respectable " people are often found to be the most stony-hearted in these circumstances, and the most useless, too, when an opportunity occurs to do a

little practical good to those who in all the world have the most direct claim upon them.

The "white slave traffic," considered in the full significance of the phrase, where it involves the kidnapping and abduction of girls for immoral purposes, has only recently been reduced by legislation in this country to very unimportant dimensions scarcely justifying its inclusion as a cause of immorality. In other countries the danger is still great. There can be little doubt that of the happily small number of girls who disappear mysteriously and are not heard of again, a proportion meet with this terrible fate. While we should feel the deepest concern so long as one victim in ten years may be so desperately wronged within the limits of our humane civilization, and hold ourselves in readiness actively to support any movement or legislation which may promise to minimize this danger, we are compelled to keep this factor well in the background of any well-proportioned consideration of the whole subject of evil moral conditions.

It may, however, be opportune to point out here that girls may undoubtedly run a certain amount of risk in responding too freely to the advances of strangers when travelling, and in particular in entering motor-cars or taxi-cabs with chance acquaintances, even although the offer of a "lift" may appear to be made in all good faith. Neither should they allow themselves to be induced to enter a strange house upon any pretext which may seem at all extravagant or suspicious.

Those persons who are engaged in this nefarious business often employ drugs. In one case which came to the knowledge of the writer an attempt of this kind was made upon a girl late at night in a London omnibus. A man and a woman, both total strangers to her, entered the almost empty vehicle, and the man sat on the vacant seat at her side. The man dropped

his gloves on to the floor and, as he stooped to pick them up, the girl felt a sharp pin-prick in her leg and very soon afterwards began to feel faint. The man and woman then exhibited great concern and said that they would take her home in a cab, claiming relationship; the girl fortunately realized her danger and had sufficient presence of mind to appeal to the conductor, whereupon the man and woman hurried away. Afterwards the broken point of a hypodermic syringe was found in the girl's leg, and it appeared that the breaking of the instrument had prevented her from receiving the full dose. If she had lost consciousness rapidly it is likely that the plan of the abductors—as her assailants presumably were—would have succeeded.

It would be a wise precaution if parents and friends would warn inexperienced girls in London against possibilities of this kind, since, although the danger may be exceedingly remote, it is correspondingly startling.

There is also to be noticed the activity of those persons who make a business of the encouragement of vice. The procurer or procuress, as distinct from the white-slave trafficker, strives, not necessarily to abduct innocent girls, but to introduce, for a consideration, girls of immoral character to clients desiring such introductions. This is sometimes almost tantamount to the activity of the white-slave trafficker inasmuch as girls of attractive appearance are often cajoled or bullied or otherwise influenced into adopting an immoral life; the chief difference lies, however, in the fact that, in the latter case the girls are not usually forcibly abducted or virtually imprisoned.

On the other side of the picture we have the pimp, whose function is to introduce suitable men to women of loose morals and take a share of their earnings.

These trades are carried out clandestinely to a considerable extent in London as elsewhere. Their activities are very much limited, and this is probably

due to the fact that in this country commercialized vice in bordells and other establishments is not countenanced either by law or public opinion. Where an open market exists in the commodity of vice a great additional spur is at once given to the activity, and the profits, both of the pimp and the procurer; where there is no such market they necessarily operate in a limited sphere.

We may now bring our list of circumstantial causes to an end, without at the same time claiming for it anything resembling finality, and turn to a consideration of the great underlying cause of all irregular manifestations of the creative instinct of sex. And here the writer wishes to warn his readers that some of the statements made by him in the next and following chapters may be regarded as hypothetical only. At the same time he believes that very vital truths are to be found in the directions indicated, and he ventures to advance these hypotheses in the hope that thinking people may be induced to direct their attention to some possibilities hitherto often overlooked by those dealing with moral problems.

CHAPTER XIV

THE UNDERLYING CAUSE

"So God created Man in His own image, in the image of God created He him: male and female created He them."

—*Genesis*, i. 27.

The creative attributes of Man: brain, larynx, sex organs—Three manifestations of creative force: thought, vibration, generation—Relation between brain functions and sex functions: the larynx—The "Word" of Genesis—Practical applications—Three paths of escape: transmutation of the sex impulse, enlightenment, the higher love.

It has already been suggested that the causes of wrongdoing enumerated in the previous chapter, important as they are, must be regarded as circumstantial causes only. They are merely functions of, and accidental accessories to, one great underlying cause, apart from which they would be entirely inactive. This underlying cause is widely recognized, as we have noted, under such loose and unsatisfactory descriptions as "nature," "original sin," and other names. Its true quality and significance are known to a very few only of the most enlightened among rescue workers. It is of the utmost practical importance to the work that the nature of this basic influence should be grasped, at least in its elements, by those who are now attempting to ameliorate moral conditions.

For, just as this force is the original tap-root from the first stirring of which all subsequent earthy

ramifications of darkness date their inception and draw their impulse, so it is also the chief source whence energy rightly directed may be drawn to nourish the more aerial growth of stem, leaf and flower in the sunlight above. Man's unfoldment, like that of the plant, is rooted in the mud; like the plant also he has the potentiality of rising and carrying out his destiny and chief function within a clearer and brighter medium than that which gives him material birth. The same primal force which, in the beginning, caused the seed-man to stir and strike shoots deeply into his earthy environment is now leading him into an inkling knowledge of that more ethereal world above him in which he has also a heritage; the same force will in time guide him to his destined blossoming and fruitage therein. As yet the first green shoot of his upward aspiration is barely visible above the mould.

But what is this basic principle? Let us descend from the realms of metaphor and inquire.

It is nothing more or less than *the urge to create.*

"So God created Man in his own image."

The words from Genesis have a far deeper significance than the usual pulpit interpretation they receive in these days of ecclesiastical obscurantism. With one only of these deeper meanings are we concerned here.

The Creator made Man "in His own image." Therefore He endowed Man with the attributes—among others—of *a potential creator.*

Man is destined to evolve into a creator.

This is the sublime truth which Man—denoting all mankind and womankind—has to learn, and is already beginning here and there to realize. It is a truth which the reader who has not closely inquired into these matters is not expected to accept at sight. We shall hope, however, to suggest some thoughts which will lead to an intelligent inquiry into, and realization

of, this stupendous fact of life, and of its close bearing upon our own special problem.

That Man is designed to develop into a creator we have already one strong indication in the fact that, in this earth life of questionings and cross-purposes and sometime aimless endeavour, the only really lasting happiness and satisfaction of the soul that he is able to grasp comes to him through the manifestation of creative activity in one form or another. No man is so envied of his fellows as he who is highly endowed with the gift of creative self-expression in whatever sphere.

Creation manifests in several forms, of which procreation is not the highest. The three mainsprings of creative activity, as manifested to mortals, are—Thought—the Word (or Vibration), Generation. Their respective material agents are represented in mankind by the triad of—brain—larynx—generative organs. Among these even the young medical science of to-day recognizes the most intimate inter-relation.

The above is merely a re-statement of certain ancient spiritual truths which have been handed down the ages, but are now partially eclipsed in the present nadir of materialism. These truths also appear in one form or another in the inner teachings of many of the older religions and—to those who are able to recognize plain scientific truth, plainly stated but often somewhat mistranslated—in the Bible of Christianity.

Of these three elements of creative force—Thought, Vibration, and Generation—man is mainly concerned, at his present stage of evolution, with the first and the last. Modern philosophy—which is also science—has already approached to a realization of the truth that thought is less destructible and more real and permanent a thing than material form; while modern science—which is practical philosophy—has already recognized matter as an unstable and variable disturbance or vibration within a tenuous and intangible

medium which it has designated " ether." The inner teachings of all inspired religions of all ages—including Christianity—correlate and confirm the findings both of philosophy and science.

For the present we will merely suggest that the creative power of thought—not yet, or necessarily, the thought of man—may lie in an ability to control or modify the disturbances within this etheric medium. The ultimate function of man's physical agent in the realm of thought, his brain—an organ, as medical science will again attest, with a very small proportion of its available area as yet developed—may be to teach him in future the laws governing this realm and how to work constructively in this medium. When he has mastered this lesson he may be enabled to mould material substance directly by the thought-power of his creative will instead of, as now, being obliged to use the intermediary of his hands. There have been in the past well-authenticated instances of the possession of such power over matter by highly evolved personalities, although, in this incredulous age, they are usually relegated to the status of legend or allegory. Such powers are almost certainly possessed by advanced human beings of to-day, but they are by no means paraded for the diversion of the multitude. Instances could be cited and strong arguments adduced in support of all the above suggestions, but they would not be germane to the present task of the writer, which is to attempt to demonstrate a significant relation between the creative functions of mankind and to discover how such a realization may help us in the treatment of our problem.

Let us then for the moment assume as a possibility that the brain may be the physical agent through which man is enabled to approach, and ultimately to function within, a realm of creative thought; that the brain, in fact, may have creative potency. We have

much direct evidence for the correlation of this physical brain to a physical organ with which man already functions extensively in the creation of new forms on the physical plane—the generative apparatus. If the flow of creative energy be drained by an unreasonable activity of the sex-function, diverted by its misuse, or dammed up by complete repression which is unbalanced by another creative outlet, one of the consequences is found to be a derangement—either starvation, distortion, or hyperactivity—of the brain function. Conversely, the energetic utilization of the brain's creative propensities in the high constructive thought of the intellectual man is found to minimize his desire for sexual activity, since the creative urge finds its outlet in a higher expression. The two forms of creative energy are—given certain conditions—in some degree interchangeable; that is to say that an undue accumulation of identically similar energy in one zone may, by informed effort, be shunted off to expend itself otherwhere. This knowledge supplies us with a golden key.

We now wish to suggest—again *sub judice*—that such facts—which, for the benefit of those who regard the as yet infantile re-discoveries of modern science as the sole reliable touchstone—we would point out are medically substantiated—point to the closest possible connection between two organs of our postulated creative triad—to wit, brain and sex-organs. Space does not permit us to consider many other most illuminating facts and analogies which bear upon this subject. The information is easily available to those who desire to find more conclusive evidence.[1]

[1] The interested reader will find this subject dealt with exhaustively in works upon some of the ancient religions and philosophies. A very detailed account is contained in the *Rosicrucian Cosmo-conception*. This should be read in conjunction with works which approach the same subject from other aspects also.

We may recall here also that we have already had occasion to note some indication of the practical working of this law when observing the mental condition of many of those girls and women in the Rescue Homes who are also sexually abnormal.

The third creative organ, the larynx, does not appear as yet closely to concern man in his development towards the status and power of a creative being. Its connection with the other two creative organs should, however, be indicated here as shortly as possible in order to complete our preliminary argument. As regards the physical plane we will merely point out that the connection obtaining between the larynx and the brain is suggested by the infinite gradation in tone of voice which accompanies and indicates most accurately changing mental conditions in the speaker. This is not conclusive evidence in itself, since it could be explained away superficially upon other grounds. A far stronger indication of the same class, however, is the great change which takes place in the larynx and the voice of the youth at the period of puberty, when developments and changes are also taking place in the organs of sex.

That the larynx has a true constructive or creative attribute can be shown independently by a simple and very beautiful analogy. Its function is to produce sounds—which are rhythmic vibrations in the medium of air. All such rhythmic vibrations, in whatever medium, are distinguished by the same inherent creative potentiality. If grains of sand be strewn upon a glass, or thin metal, plate and a violin bow be drawn across the edge of the plate, so as to produce a rhythmic vibration, then the particles of sand are seen to arrange themselves into definite patterns; if the note of the vibration be altered, the first pattern will break up and a new one will take its place. In a true understanding of this simple laboratory experiment we actually hold the key to the secret of the mode of

creation of the whole of the material universe as described—but, again, ecclesiastically obscured—in the Book of Genesis.

All matter has been shown, as we have already observed in our second chapter, to consist of an infinite number of different combinations of atoms of a definite and relatively small number of elemental substances. The inner structure of these atoms, as revealed by science, is found to consist of varying numbers—although constant for atoms of the same element—of far more minute particles (electrons) revolving or vibrating in definite patterns about a central attractive force. If one of these particles breaks away from the group the atom breaks down, either disintegrating or immediately rearranging its pattern into a new form, which corresponds to the atom of another element. And this process of transmutation of the elements has actually been observed by physicists.

What does this mean, and wherein lies its connection with the Book of Genesis and with our problem?

The analogy is complete, for in just the same way that the vibrations of the violin bow—or of the human voice, suitably applied—will create and maintain geometrical patterns in the particles of sand, so does the Voice of the Creator—the Cosmic Vibration—the Creative Fiat—the Logos—the *Word* of Genesis—*create and maintain* those patterns in the atoms of each element upon which their physical characteristics, and so the very existence of our material universe depend. The Creative Fiat is still sounding, the Word still creating—for has not even man observed progressive changes in the pattern of those particles within the atom of radium tending towards the transmutation of that element into the element lead?

". . . and the Word was God."

The last syllable of the creative Word is not yet spoken.

Such, then, is the creative function of the Word—of

Vibration—of the larynx. It is that aspect of the Creator which corresponds with the as yet suppressed creative attributes of the larynx of man. Man's other creative faculties—brain and sex—correspond, in an infinitely inferior, undeveloped and feeble degree, with the other two sublime aspects of the Creator—the divine Will and the divine Love. The activities of these are also recorded in that bottomless mine of mistranslated and misinterpreted *scientific* information —the Bible.

Thus has the Creator made Man truly " in His own image."

We may seem to have wandered far from our subject and our problem, but if we are able to grasp the truth of the foregoing facts and all that they imply, we stand actually nearer to a true realization of the nature of our problem than we have ever stood yet, and we shall also be able to see glimpses of a solution. These glimpses show us three main paths out of the quagmire.

Firstly, if man—the term including both sexes—is indeed designed to be a creator, he cannot safely be denied an expression of his awakening creative force. His present impulse, in the case of the majority, is first to express that urge in the manner with which his earthy material existence and unfoldment has almost exclusively familiarized him—in sexual activity, whether legitimate or illegitimate; for it must be expressed. But here, in man's next most dominant creative organ—his brain—we have a higher outlet, a safety-valve, for that very same life force.

The trend of evolution is undoubtedly to cause man more and more to develop the creative power of his brain at the expense of undue activity of the creative force of his lower functions. In the far distant time, when his mastery of the forces in the higher ethers which he is now only just beginning to contact—and in the still higher realm of creative thought—enable

him to work consciously and constructively in those higher worlds where he now acts unconsciously and often destructively, realms in which his spirit will be able to function with far greater facility than it can in his present material body, then his need for a physical body will have passed and with that need will have passed also the desire to express himself creatively in the physical. This step in the evolution of mankind is yet æons ahead, but it is already foreshadowed. Evolution never proceeds by jerks, but by infinitesimally gradual stages, the old order slowly blending into the new. This blending, which has already begun amongst the advanced peoples in the world to-day, is a sign of the trend of our evolution, and the cause also of all the misery and unrest and questioning resulting inevitably from the clashing of material and spiritual impulses. The promise of man's high ultimate development is shown also in the intense pleasure which his two most active creative attributes afford him—firstly, the sex-function, but now, and in ever-increasing degree, the creative function of the brain—self-expression.

And now to descend to practical particulars, deducible from, and understandable in the light of, the above.

Our present problem is to discover how this innate creative force—the counterpart of divinity in man—which may not be suppressed, can be transmuted from undue expression through sex channels to other activities more ennobling. It is already clear that, for man or woman, we can provide an alternative outlet by encouraging the creative activity of the brain itself, or of the brain functioning through the hands. Sex impulses are often very strongly developed in comparatively brainless individuals; the reason for this we can now readily understand; the brain has been robbed by the lower functions of its due share of the divine force. If the brain can be stimulated and

induced to do some creative work this will have the effect of drawing some of the force away from the lower channel of expression.

Creation of the highly developed brain—such as that of the musician, poet, painter or sculptor, who uses his hands merely that his creations may be made known to other brains of like calibre—will not help us with the girls and women at the Rescue Homes or with the loose and mentally undeveloped youth of the street corner. But truly creative work is equally to be found upon less exalted and more easily accessible planes. We all know, for instance, the intense pride which some even of the more intellectual among us take in some simple object—a wooden box or a table—which they have fashioned with their own hands. Such is certainly a creation in the material, but it demands first the conception of a creative thought-image in the brain before it can take material shape. Creative work of this kind we can provide and encourage amongst the men and women who constitute our problem. Needlework is creative work, so is hose-knitting, carpentry, boot-making: domestic service and laundry work, strictly speaking, are not.

It is necessary to remember, however, that monotony of occupation also enters into the question here. For example, hose-knitting may have the desirable quality of constructiveness which we seek, but it may also introduce an element of monotony that more than counterbalances such advantage. Domestic service, on the other hand, although non-creative, gives a variety of occupation which to some extent redeems it. The ideal occupation would provide variety and constructiveness in well-balanced proportions. Such work is not easily provided even under non-industrial conditions; it certainly does not lend itself to successful commercial ventures. But, applied to the girls and women at the Homes, under the special conditions obtaining therein, it should have a value more than

commensurate with the difficulties to be overcome in providing it.

There is no need to labour this point now that we have arrived at the crux of our argument. Let the girls and women and the young men who are driven astray by the misdirection of one aspect of that insuppressible divine creative urge find easement and satisfaction to what extent may in them lie in the equally divine privilege of looking upon the work of their hands and knowing that it is good. And let those whose lot it may be to initiate and supervise practical schemes for education, training or recreation, in the Homes or elsewhere, bear these important considerations ever in the foreground of their minds that they may be enabled to make a wise choice as to the subjects to which greatest attention shall be given.

It is by no means suggested, of course, that in such schemes will be found a panacea for all the evils with which we are concerned, or a highway of escape from them; but in adopting them we shall at least be working intelligently with the current of our evolution instead of blindly struggling across or against it. There is here a path whose foundation is the solid rock of elemental truth, the first narrow way which, with many windings and with many obstacles along its route, will surely lead ultimately out of the morass.

The second path we have to consider is that of enlightenment. It is obvious that, if man is truly cast in the image of the Creator, if his destiny, after much stumbling and many hard lessons, is to reach such a high estate, a knowledge of these facts, and a belief in his destiny will help man incalculably to rise above the promptings of his lower nature. If he can be brought to realize, for instance, that by indulging in sexual excesses he is merely casting himself so much farther down the hill and setting himself an inevitable weary upward climb for the future, retarding the unfoldment of his higher divine attributes, the

attainment of freedom and power and full self-expression, will not that knowledge tend to stay the individual and to stem the tide of our problem? This consideration of enlightenment brings us at once within the province of religious teaching and we shall consider in another chapter how the present position of this stands in relation to our problem. This, our second path, cannot be made available to all until light is shed upon it by those exponents of religion to whom the lanterns have been entrusted.

Our third path involves again the exercise of an alternative creative attribute higher than that of sexual love. In the early part of this chapter the writer made a statement to the effect that man's sole lasting satisfaction on earth is to be found in creative work. He is conscious that the thoughtful reader may have challenged this statement mentally, considering that at least equal satisfaction and happiness is to be gained by unselfish service in the interests of others. This is, of course, true, but it does not weaken our first proposition: it strongly supports it. We have stated that the three aspects of the divine creative power, corresponding to, but infinitely transcending, the three creative functions of man are: Will, the Word (vibration or activity), and Love. The greater Love so far transcends the primitive and selfish human emotion that it embraces all created things and works impartially for their upliftment. Therefore a man or woman who devotes energy to unselfish service for others and finds lasting happiness therein is still exercising a creative function—that of love—but upon a far higher plane, already vastly higher than that upon which rests the procreative love of man.

This, then, is the third path of escape from the moral slough, less easy to find in practice perhaps than either of the other two. If youths, and the girls at the Homes with whom we are chiefly concerned—and many men and women also with whom directly we

are not—can be taught by exhortation and example the lesson of unselfishness, of thought for others even more unfortunate than themselves; can be made to realize in a practical manner the happiness to be derived from helping others; can be induced to attempt their " one good turn a day," the experience will assist materially in helping them in a lasting manner and in the solution of our problem. And such effort again will be unchallengeably sound in that it will be in direct alignment with the upward trend of cosmic evolution.

To summarize then, we find our underlying cause, upon close examination, to consist of a God-given creative impulse of threefold nature. With its lowest function—Sex—we are all too familiar; the second function—Thought—we are just, within the last few thousand years, barely beginning to explore; while with the third—the Logos—we may at present only reckon by analogy.

We find also a direct pointing of the way and great hopes for an ultimate escape from the undue embarrassment of sex in a cultivation of its subtler distillation—unselfish love and service for others—and also in a determined attempt at mastery of the second alternative creative impulse—constructive Thought.

PART IV
COUNTER-CURRENTS

CHAPTER XV

NEEDS

Immediate needs—Co-ordination—Extension of provision—New accommodation. Ultimate needs—Care of mentally unbalanced—Wages revision—Education and sex-education—Housing reform—Social clubs and provision for recreation—Removal of suggestive influences—Increase in patrol work—Secure lodging accommodation—"Clearing Houses"—Stimulation of religion and an awakening of the Church—Religion and the moral problem.

We have examined, in Chapter XIII, some of the danger-currents that sweep towards the Maelstrom. We have now to decide what measures may usefully be taken to rob those currents of their power, to turn them aside, or neutralize them altogether. It is obvious that, if counter-currents can be set up, both in the individual and in the community, both by direct pressure and by that most powerful influence the flank attack, a very great deal of good may be achieved and much potential evil avoided.

But, first of all, we may most usefully consider what immediate steps can be taken to fortify those islands in the flood, the Rescue Homes. The urgent needs of these Homes are threefold:

1. Their work appears to require closer co-ordination.

2. The present accommodation, after the removal of certain undesirable units, needs improving and extending.
3. A certain amount of new accommodation is called for.

As regards the first need we have already observed the effects of some existing deficiencies in the co-ordination of the work, in the lack of communications and co-operation. The recently formed *Central Council for Rescue and Preventive Work in London*—which includes in its membership representatives of Government Departments, Public Authorities and Local Government Authorities as well as of a large number of Voluntary Agencies—is now making a determined effort, in close co-operation with the Homes themselves, to bring about a better co-ordination of the work. It is probable that this activity alone will have the effect of minimizing considerably any deficiencies which may now exist and of modifying any misdirected effort.

2. Those Homes which are in immediate danger of closing down through lack of funds could be assisted, and those where the work is cramped for the same reason could be enabled to extend their usefulness. Certain specific needs in the way of equipment, which we have already noted (p. 85), should also be supplied.

There appears also to be a need for the extension of the present provision of almost every type, and this would probably still be necessary even if the existing provision could be brought up to the highest possible pitch of efficiency. Particularly is there found to be a demand for the following:

(*a*) Provision for mothers and babies at the period when they leave Lying-in Homes, Hospitals and Infirmaries.

(*b*) Emergency accommodation for unmarried mothers stranded with babies in their care.
(*c*) Inexpensive Hostels for the accommodation of reclaimed girls in receipt of small salaries.
(*d*) Homes for young children who have been the victims of criminal assault.
(*e*) Maternity Homes reserved for the accommodation of very young mothers.
(*f*) Maternity Homes for unmarried mothers with venereal disease.
(*g*) Residential Hostels for the continuation treatment of working girls and mothers infected with venereal disease.
(*h*) Great improvement in the provision within the Homes for general education, vocational training and recreation. Possibly the foundation of special training centres and Holiday Homes for the extension or relief of the work at the Homes themselves.

Ultimate Needs

3. Regarding more comprehensive measures of wider import, the remedies to be applied will largely be found as the natural corollaries to the circumstantial causes we have already differentiated—in an arrestation, in fact, of the individual danger-currents (p. 167). Measures of this kind may be set down roughly as follows:

(*a*) Suitable arrangements for the care and control of those slightly mentally afflicted or unbalanced.
(*b*) The removal of unfair wage conditions.
(*c*) General education, and right sex-education, both within and without the Homes.
(*d*) Betterment of housing conditions in certain areas.

(*e*) The continued formation of Clubs and Institutes, where youth of both sexes may find legitimate recreation and relief from monotony and loneliness. The promotion of team-games and sports and of all healthy indoor and outdoor interests.

(*f*) The removal of suggestive and obviously undesirable influences of various kinds by any possible means: the bringing of all possible pressure to bear towards improving the tone of the Press.

(*g*) An increase in patrol work in public places; the provision of greater facilities by which single respectable girls may be enabled to find secure lodging accommodation; possibly the establishment of "Clearing Houses."

(*h*) The urgent stimulation of the Church to a realization of its neglected responsibilities and opportunities in these matters; a far-reaching modification and vivification of the present forms of religious observance and a rationalization of religious instruction to keep pace with the intellectual development of the age.

Some of the above proposed measures call for no further comment or have already been dealt with in detail elsewhere; others require some explanation or expansion.

(*c*) Sex-education has always been a debatable subject, and it has been found that even the most approved methods of imparting this knowledge to children may exhibit at least some undesirable features. Knowledge of the basic facts and dangers of sex is undoubtedly one of the few reliable safeguards against the early acquisition of undesirable views and habits. The child's first questionings upon this subject should be met frankly and fearlessly and without any suggestion of mystery or shame; the information imparted should be carefully chosen to

suit the age and mentality of the inquirer. At a riper age the study of botany ever offers a more direct initiation by analogy into the facts of life and increase of life, while, when an age of discretion is reached, some more definite teaching is usually called for. There is no doubt that, if the sacred nature of the creative sex-function can be indicated on the lines set out in the previous chapter, many of the difficulties and the objections to the imparting of this knowledge would automatically disappear.

And, although there may remain difficulties in the way of imparting instruction to youth upon matters relating to sex, it appears to the writer that there is a very important aspect of this problem which is usually overlooked or under-emphasized. The time has surely arrived for the complete abandonment of artificiality and false modesty and for regarding the subject in a truer perspective.

It has long been the custom, notably among religious bodies, and in particular at the kind of rescue institution with which we are concerned, to impress upon young people that the sex-impulse is a thing of which humanity should on the whole be rather ashamed; that it should be mentally disregarded as far as possible.

The more enlightened view looks upon this great natural force, and in particular upon our new realization of the need to master and control it, as the strongest possible evidence of the upward evolution of mankind. This thing, this bogey of sex—regarding only its expression in the physical (for its significance soars far above material existence)—belongs to the animal stage of progress from which we are now beginning to pass.

It is a wonderful scheme devised by an all-wise Creator for the propagation and perfection of physical form. There is no reason for being ashamed of it, but there is every reason for wishing ultimately to

rise above it. It is firmly implanted in our nature by æons of slow evolution; we cannot hope to rise at once superior to its promptings.

Self-consciousness is the recently-acquired faculty which will enable us in time to master it. The animal is not self-conscious, and the animal knows no shame. It was perhaps unavoidable that man, when " the eyes of them both were opened and they knew that they were naked," should swing to the further extreme and experience an unnecessary degree of shame and a false modesty. A clearer understanding—which is now arriving—throws these things into a truer proportion.

Is it not this higher understanding which we need to pass on to the men and women whose eyes are still clouded by the ancient misconception?

And is not " recognize and control " a better slogan than " smother and pretend "?

(*e*) A great deal is already being done in the maintenance of working men's and women's Clubs and Institutes, and in social workers' Settlements in poor districts: this is a most valuable movement from the point of view of our problem and cannot well be over-stimulated. Boys' Brigades, Boy Scouts and Girl Guides must also be included within this category.

The recent regulations permitting games in the public parks are also a step in the right direction, as are all means calculated to induce young men to take part in a game themselves rather than to flock in their thousands to watch a few professionals play it for them.

(*f*) The removal of suggestive influences would in some cases involve much bitter controversy and also legislation. It is only from the education of public opinion along the right lines that any radical and enduring change can be anticipated. Particularly does this apply to the influencing of the ultra-

sensational sections—that is to say, of the greater part —of the Press of to-day.

(*g*) Patrol work in public places needs to be extended, and it is to be hoped that an increase in the strength of the Women Police will go far towards accomplishing this end. It has been suggested that a useful measure to be combined with patrol work would be the establishment of central "Clearing Houses," whither Police or patrol workers could take any woman, of whatever type, at any hour of the day or night, for temporary shelter pending investigation of her peculiar needs. Some workers consider the establishment of Clearing Houses as a most pressing need; others advance objections to the suggestion upon various grounds. Such houses would undoubtedly remove one of the greatest difficulties with which patrol workers now have to contend. Workers would be assured of being able to offer help and shelter to any stranded girl or woman at a few minutes' notice, with the knowledge that she would be properly cared for and her special needs met after due inquiry had been made. Such houses, however, would be very expensive and difficult to maintain; there would be an objection to the indiscriminate mingling of women of very different types for several days together in one establishment, and the potential evils of such conditions could only be avoided by the employment of a very experienced and disproportionately large staff. The conception of the "Clearing House" may seem to be rather too mechanical in essence when applied to such a very human problem, to have rather too much of the suggestion of a postal sorting-office; it has promising features, nevertheless, and the urgency of street work and street problems is often so great that an experiment along these lines would probably be well worth making.

A most valuable preventive measure is the provision of safe lodging accommodation for girls and women in

London and other big cities, and also the effective advertisement of such accommodation in order that it may become known to that class who chiefly need it. Several lists of such lodgings have been issued within the last few years, but it is an unfortunate fact that even the most recent of these have been literally worse than useless owing to the great number of inaccuracies contained. A really reliable and comprehensive list is still lacking.

(*h*) We have already suggested in several places that the religious instruction provided, both within the Homes and outside them, is found to-day to fail lamentably, both in a grasp of opportunities, in an appreciation of the needs of the age and in its avowed purpose. There is the greatest need that this most important of all counteracting influences against wrongdoing should be brought to bear with all possible effectiveness. There are, unfortunately, many at the present day who would question the utility of any effort based on religion in combating such conditions as those with which we are concerned. If we are to attempt to find a remedy in this direction, therefore, it is of the first importance that a basis of agreement should be reached by workers and supporters of all shades of opinion, whether they approach the problem primarily from the religious, social, philosophical, scientific, medical or public health points of view.

The writer does not wish, when dealing with the influence of religion upon morality, to take for his argument any premiss which may be widely challenged at the outset. He would prefer, if such a thing were feasible, to find a common starting-line against which all rational critics, of whatever belief or lack of belief, will be able to set foot. To expect the whole world to agree upon any one statement or policy is obviously hopeless, but desiring to conflict with as few rational opinions as possible, he would, therefore, advance

at the outset the following broad and elementary postulates only:

(*a*) That there is at present observable among the people of this country and elsewhere a laxity of moral outlook and conduct which is undesirable and not calculated to further the highest development or ultimate happiness either of the individuals or the nations concerned.

(*b*) That the adoption of the individual of some code of moral conduct such as has been proved to be in harmony with natural laws, and also productive of better social conditions, is an advantage to be sought.

(*c*) That such a code is more readily received and acted upon by those who can believe sincerely in the continued conscious survival of the individual *ego* after death, in a state or states of existence of which the conditions are not independent of the conduct of the individual during life on earth; who can believe also that the whole scheme is directed by a Supreme Being, who is the Creator.

That the genuine acceptance of such a belief is, in fact, a very powerful shield against any temptation towards wrongdoing.

(*d*) *That it is, therefore, highly desirable that a rational creed should be energetically presented to the people in that manner, consistent with the dignity and spiritual attributes of the subject, which is deemed most likely to ensure its acceptance.*

From the above premisses a simple process of logic, together with the consideration of a few facts not yet generally recognized, will, unfortunately, lead us inevitably to the conclusion:

(*e*) That the Established Church, which is officially responsible for the presentation of religious truths to the people, has so far proved unequal to its task; that it is still clinging desperately to a nursery version of the Christian doctrine, which was eminently suited for presentation in the Dark or Middle Ages, but has been outgrown by the intellectually advanced people of to-day; that, moreover, the Church has been so long blindfolded by this superficial doctrine of infancy that it has completely forgotten the deeper wisdom underlying it and the Inner Doctrine of which it was also once possessed; that it can no longer read its own Book of Authority—the Bible—with full and true understanding, fails to instruct its appointed ministers and preachers in the very elements of religious knowledge and, worst of all, that the Church is actually receiving religious education, and submitting to modification of its out-of-date dogmas from the enlightened among the laity, who are daily more and more winning a way to the truth through intellectual channels.

Now, with regard to religious belief, men and women may all be classed under one or other of the following headings:

(*a*) Those who ignore the subject entirely as unworthy of their attention.
(*b*) Atheists, who deny the existence of a Deity, and usually accept material existence as the only reality.
(*c*) Agnostics, who believe that nothing is known, or is likely to be made known, beyond that which appertains to material phenomena.
(*d*) Believers, of many diverse persuasions, who

> accept the existence of a supernatural Being, variously styled, and to whom various attributes are credited, those more usually accepted being the creative function, omniscience, omnipotence, omnipresence and a continuous striving towards the supremacy of that quality which a consensus of human opinion in fairly complete agreement recognizes as " good."

Amongst all these various shades of opinion it is hoped that comparatively few will be found to take exception to anything set out in our four premisses above, although our ultimate conclusion will certainly meet with violent opposition in certain quarters.

The non-thinker will obviously raise no great objection, nor is he logically in a position to do so. If he ignores religion entirely he is not likely to give any very deep thought to moral problems either, but if such should come under his notice, his attitude will probably be : " If you think that your religious ideas can do any good you are welcome to try them, and you have my good wishes."

The conscientious and well-disposed atheist or agnostic may perhaps reasonably raise an objection to a proposal to fight the evil upon issues of religion on the ground that any definite teachings regarding a future life are opposed to what he holds to be the truth. The atheist, however, can scarcely uphold such a protest very strongly, for his convictions do not in any case carry him beyond the grave, and if existence is to end there, it would seem that teachings of whatever kind can do no great harm from his point of view, provided that they are not actually injurious to his fellow-men.

Believers of all denominations will presumably agree with our premisses, although, unfortunately, they will mostly desire to add a rider to the effect that only through the acceptance of their own particular creed

is salvation really to be gained. At least we feel that we may count upon their support so far as we have gone; we hope shortly to advance arguments to suggest that, if each sect were to examine carefully its own foundation-stones and to make intelligent inquiry into the beliefs of others, *with particular reference to the character, state of development and peculiar needs of the peoples holding such alien beliefs*, they would be likely to discover a most surprising parallelism among nearly all religions, as well as a remarkably sound basis for mutual respect and broad-minded co-operation in the work of the future.

Even the fatalist amongst believers, who denies to man the possession of free will and regards every occurrence as pre-ordained by a higher power, should raise no objection to an attempt towards improvement, regarding such at the worst merely as a waste of effort.

Let us, therefore, now leave behind the small proportion of those actually inimical to any religious cult or teaching and boldly adopt as our formula for those who will follow, and for those others who will give it their sympathetic regard, our fourth and main premiss :

That it is highly desirable that a rational creed should be energetically presented to the people in that manner, consistent with the dignity and spiritual attributes of the subject, which is deemed most likely to ensure its acceptance.

And here let us first of all inquire in some detail how far the Established Church of England is working towards the attainment of this desirable goal, and what measure of success, if any, can be anticipated from its present policy and activities for the enlightenment and guidance of its people.

CHAPTER XVI

THE CHURCH

". . . their Words to Scorn
Are scatter'd and their Mouths are stopt with Dust."
—*The Rubáiyát of Omar Khayyám.*

"The clergy are dear good fellows, but their training causes them to think in the Twelfth Century: they are usually found to be intelligent upon every subject except religion. Unless we can bring our religion to the bar of reason we must face the fact that it will remain mere superstition."
—*From one of the most enlightened pulpits in London.*

"Let the blind be no longer leaders of the blind; reconstruct the hierarchy of intelligence and holiness and recognize only *those who know* as the teachers of *those who believe.*"—*Mystic Christianity.*

Inefficiency of the Church a chief cause of moral laxity—The clergy themselves uninstructed in religious truths—The normal service—Its formality and emptiness—The obscuring of truth—The challenges to religion of philosophy and science—Their identity in fact with Religion—The doctrine of the resurrection of the body—How the Church is being educated in religious matters by the laity—A neglected doctrine—A "Copec" Report and a factor overlooked by "Copec"—The nature of true faith—A living and rational Christian service—The religious need of to-day—The moral value of a rational teaching—The Church's opportunity—A conference of ecclesiastical broad-mindedness—Signs of an awakening.

THE best and the worst that can be said for the present exposition by the Church of England of the Christian

Religion is that it conceals wonderful elemental truths: the best lies in the fact that those ancient basic truths—although often mistranslated and usually misinterpreted—are, in spite of the Church, still incorporated in its doctrine: the worst lies in the fact that they are by the Church so persistently and very effectively concealed.

Let it be clearly stated here that the writer fully recognizes, and has nothing but respect and humble admiration for, the immense amount of good and charitable *work* which is done under the ægis and administration of the Church. He laments, however—and that with no small voice—the lack of imagination generally displayed by its preceptors in their *teaching*, and their neglect of the opportunity that to-day lies close within their reach for effecting a good compared with which all that they have been able to do in the past would appear but as the proverbial drop in the ocean. And, be it noted, this neglect lies more nearly at the root of our special problem of moral conditions than do any of the causes we have as yet touched upon. In fact, the Church itself, because of its inertia touching this duty of presentation of spiritual truth, might not unfairly be regarded as a more powerful negative cause of wrongdoing than are any or all of the more obvious and ill-seeming positive causes and influences which it is accustomed to deplore from its pulpits. This is indeed a strong indictment, but there are many who will support it.

Wherein lies this weakness of the Church?

We have observed more than once that the present age is one of intellectual development—of critical and logical inquiry into all things both old and new. A simple and uneducated people may be found willing faithfully to accept dogmatic teachings and to follow a set form of worship laid down by an educated priesthood—and such indeed is usually the best form in which religious truth can be presented to them:

not so, however, an intellectually emancipated people. Every community calls for a religious teaching graded according to its particular needs and stage of development. There is surely only one actual Truth; but there are many degrees of enlightenment, many stages of realization of this Truth. It is as useless to preach the higher esoteric truths of the Christian religion to a congregation of Central African natives—who simply have not yet evolved the mental machinery by which to grasp them—as it is futile in the present day to reiterate the very child's alphabet of that same religion to the intellectually developed people of this country. They naturally demand stronger meat, and they will inevitably obtain it. In point of fact they are actually obtaining it to-day, although, unfortunately, not through the medium of the Church. This one fact is perhaps the strongest indictment for dereliction of duty which the Church in the near future may be called upon to face.

Eighty per cent. of the young people of to-day, as we have already noted, never enter a place of worship. The mention of religious subjects—the orthodox doctrine of the Church—is by them received in cynical silence or with open derision,

> ". . . their Words to Scorn
> Are scatter'd . . ."

Why should this be so? Let us consider for a moment what the Church has to offer a spiritually aspiring, but at the same time intelligent and critical, inquirer who enters a place of orthodox Christian worship at an age of ripe experience of the world. What stimulation or nourishment is provided for mind or soul?

There is a service composed of a set form of words, often gabbled through unthinkingly and with little or no regard to their inner significance, by both the

pastor and his flock; there is music and the singing of hymns—which constitutes the chief attraction, if not the only defence against utter boredom, for many church-goers; there is an address from the pulpit, which may be either a powerful exhortation with a strong, practical and personal appeal for right living —good advice, in short, for the conduct of life, such as can also be obtained outside the Church: but the address is more often a mere hair-splitting and wearisome expansion of the supposed meaning of a passage taken from Holy Writ; there are more sacred rites also, often performed by all parties in profound ignorance or misunderstanding of their inner significance.

". . . and their Mouths are stopt with Dust."

It might reasonably be asserted that, with the exception of a certain amount of good, practical advice, little but dust and ashes issues from the mouths of the majority of the English clergy. It would perhaps be more to the point to say that it is the ears of their hearers which are " stopt with Dust."

It might also be asserted, and it is probably capable of proof, that a large majority of the clergy have no actual knowledge whatever of the vitally important *facts* which their profession requires them to impart to others. They lay themselves open to the accusation of being, in effect, doctors ignorant of medicine, lawyers unacquainted with the elements of Law, architects who do not know the dimensions of the standard brick. It would appear that the clerical calling is a " profession "—that is all: that there is no actual knowledge behind the profession of knowledge.

Why, then, do people go to church at all?

With some it is a matter of habit and upbringing, or of blind, uncritical faith in what they have been taught from childhood; it is often regarded as " the

right thing to do," as a duty to be discharged on Sundays, having no necessary practical bearing upon conduct during the remainder of the week; some go for social reasons, or from fear of the adverse opinion of more regular attendants; many go for the sake of the music and the restful atmosphere; a number because they have an intuitive perception of the vital truths hidden behind the spiritless reiterations of the service, and in the hope—usually disappointed—of being guided towards a closer understanding of these great mysteries; a few, who are really already some distance advanced along the road to true enlightenment, enter into the very spirit behind the spoken words, understanding their real meanings often far better than does the preacher himself, and endeavouring to endure in patience the vague generalizations and frequent gross mis-statements of which he, in his ignorance, constructs his sermon.

As regards the Rescue Homes, the girls, in the words of one of the matrons, "are glad to go to church because it makes an outing."

The greater number of free persons stay away from church because the service makes no appeal to them; because it is a "dead" service; because the facts which they have learned under the name of Science, or a philosophical consideration of the apparent injustices and needless suffering of life on earth appear to them to give the lie to the teachings of religion; also because, to scientific or any other challenge, the Church seems unable to find a better answer than a pathetic entreaty to the intelligent inquirer to "have faith."

This position is all the more lamentable when it is considered that the Church possesses, plainly stated in its own Bible, the answers—if it would but understand them—to any or all challenges or criticism, whether of Science or Philosophy. And this knowledge has not been entirely lost in spite of the fact

that our present Bible was purposely mis-translated in the reign of James I, the translators who were responsible for the Authorized Version being under strict orders to incorporate nothing calculated to upset the religious beliefs of the time.

Moreover, while a little knowledge of Science or Philosophy may seem to contradict the teachings of Religion—and does, in fact, winnow out at once those modern false interpolations which had no existence in the original text at all—the more profoundly the inquirer delves into scientific and philosophic truths, the more does he observe their close concordance with the inspired revelations of religion. In fact, as is so clearly stated in that illuminating work, *Mystic Christianity*, already referred to:

> "Religion, Philosophy and Science are known to be one and the same thing. There is no conflict between Science and Religion; Philosophy and Religion; or Philosophy and Science. They are all but names for the One Truth. There is but one Truth—there cannot be more than one. And so call it by the name of Religion—the name of Science, the name of Philosophy—it matters not, for the same thing is meant."

Again, Thomson Jay Hudson, that keen logician and careful inquirer into super-mundane problems, in his convincing work, *The Evolution of the Soul*, states the position even more clearly. On page 303 he says:

> ". . . it is the province of science to remove every event from the realm of the supernatural, and to demonstrate that God created and rules this universe by and through the operation of immutable laws, which were implanted in matter and spirit from the beginning.

"It is a self-evident proposition that science does far more reverence to God in thus ascribing to Him such a power and such an intelligence, than does superstition in believing Him to labour under the necessity of supplementing His work by special creations and miraculous interventions.

"That the triumphs of science in this direction have been many and important, no one will deny. That it has been opposed at every step in its progress by theological dogmatism is current history. The reason is obvious. When science first declared its independence, it was denounced as atheistic, and it was persecuted accordingly. So great was the antagonism at first that it was tacitly understood for a long time that science was opposed to religion; and it was many years before anyone seriously thought that there could be any harmonious relation between them.

"Gradually, however, it has dawned upon the contesting parties that the conflict is not between science and religion, but between science and theological dogmatism. With this understanding, the relation of science to the Church, has, within a few years, undergone a decided change.

"The great body of the intelligent members of the Church no longer hold themselves in antagonism to the essential claims of science; and science no longer disputes the essential tenets of the Christian religion. One by one the points have been yielded, until there are but few essential features of difference in dispute."

Even if the Church were possessed of a complete Bible, with all the inaccuracies of translation eliminated, it would be only in a slightly better position than it is to-day, for the simple reason that the training of the clergy does not provide for their education in the very alphabet of their own doctrine.

They are not instructed in the inner meaning of the words of Holy Writ; they cling to the literal significance of the phrasing and ignore the spirit of it; they grasp the husks and reject the corn.[1] And yet they are, in fact, a deeply learned body of men—"usually found intelligent upon every subject except religion."

In support of the above suggestions two instances out of the great number of those available will suffice. For a long time the Churches insisted upon a literal belief in the doctrine of the resurrection of the body, and to some extent still do so. Now this doctrine is nowhere justified in the New Testament. It is, moreover, utterly opposed to reason, experience and common sense. Modern science proves indisputably that every particle of our bodies changes in its very chemical constitution many times during a lifetime. What body, then, is the spirit of a man to resume at the "resurrection"—his infantile form, that of his early manhood, or that of a possibly decrepit or diseased old age? And is the cripple or monstrously deformed individual also to resume his old suffering body? The conception is bizarre and untenable and out of conformity with all conceptions of progress and of divine justice. Public opinion among the laity has wisely refused to accept this belief, and the Church, recognizing for once the strength of the logical scepticism arrayed against it, has been induced to modify or explain away this dogma in order to remove the barrier.

Thus—and this is one instance only—is the laity of to-day, by sheer pressure of rational opinion, *educating the Church in religious matters* instead of being educated by the Church. Have things actually

[1] "The Churches have nothing but the husks that have always been the property of the masses. The real kernels of truth have been possessed by but the few elect ones."
—*Mystic Christianity*, p. 59.

come to such a pass as this: that the Church, which should be the pioneer in its own field, is lagging behind and being dragged along unwillingly in the wake of the intellectual advance? If so, it is little to be wondered that the Church as a moral influence is such a very partial success to-day. If the laity is slowly but surely arriving at the inner truths of religion, by the Way of the Head, and in spite of the obstruction strewn in the path of enlightenment by the Church itself, there is a danger that soon it will turn and rend the Church for having so long proffered the husks and secreted the corn.

As our first instance of the Church's unfortunate misrepresentation of the teachings entrusted to it we have taken the dogma of the resurrection of the body —an insupportable misconception long insisted upon by the Church as a literal truth. And yet the statements of Scripture upon which this dogma is falsely founded, when rightly understood, are found to point to a conclusion which is not a falsehood, and is by no means opposed to the findings of science. When we questioned whether a man should resume his infantile body at the " resurrection " we were not very wide of the mark after all. This introduces us at once to our second instance, which is the converse of the first—a great and vital truth which the Church categorically rejects as the rankest heresy. This is the doctrine of metempsychosis, or the successive *and progressive* reincarnation of the individual spirit in a number of separate *human* bodies.

This truth of reincarnation is stated in the plainest possible language in the New Testament teachings, both by the Master and His apostles.

Numerous quotations might be given in support of it, but perhaps our purpose will best be served by quoting a few paragraphs from the *Rosicrucian Cosmo-conception*, p. 169:

" In private He taught Rebirth to His disciples. He not only taught them in words, but He took them ' into the mountain.' This is a mystic term meaning a place of Initiation. In the course of Initiation they see for themselves that Rebirth is a fact, for there Elijah appeared before them, who, they are told, is also John the Baptist. Christ, in unequivocal terms, had previously told them, when speaking of John the Baptist, ' this is Elijah who was for to come.' He reiterates this at the transfiguration scene, saying, ' Elijah has come already and they knew him not, but have done to him whatsoever they listed.' And following this, it is said that ' they understood He spake of John the Baptist ' (Matt. xvii. 12-13). On this occasion, and also at the time when Rebirth was discussed between Him and His disciples, they told Him that some thought He was Elijah and others that He was one of the prophets who had been re-born. He commanded them to ' tell no man ' (Matt. xvii. 9; Luke ix. 21). This was to be, for thousands of years, an esoteric teaching, to be known only among the few pioneers who had fitted themselves for the knowledge, pushing ahead to the stage of development when these truths will again be known to man.

" That Christ taught Rebirth and also the law of Consequence is perhaps shown in no other place as clearly as in the case of the man who had been born blind, where His disciples asked, ' Who did sin, this man or his parents, that he was born blind? ' (John ix. 2).

" Had Christ not taught Rebirth and the law of Consequence, the natural answer would have been, ' Nonsense! how could a man have sinned *before he was born*, and have brought blindness upon himself as a result? ' But Christ does not answer in that way. He is not surprised at the question, nor does He treat it as being at all unusual, showing that it

was quite in harmony with His teachings. He explains, 'Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents; but that the work of (the) God should be made manifest in him.'

"The orthodox interpretation is that the man was born blind in order that Christ might have the opportunity of performing a miracle to show His power. It would have been a strange way for a God to obtain glory—capriciously condemning a man to many years of blindness and misery that He might 'show off' at a future time! We would consider a man who acted in such a manner a monster of cruelty.

"How much more logical to think that there may be another explanation. To impute to God conduct which, in a human being, we would denounce in the strongest terms is surely unreasonable.

"Christ differentiates between the physically blind body of the man and the God within, which is the higher self.

"The dense body has committed no sin. The God within has done some deed which manifests in the particular affliction from which he is suffering. It is not stretching a point to call a man a God. Paul says, 'know ye not that ye are Gods?' and he refers to the human body as the 'temple of God,' the indwelling spirit."

That the doctrine of reincarnation is the basis of numerous other religions, antedating Christianity by thousands of years, and that in itself it gives a rational explanation of nearly every puzzling fact and seeming injustice of the life on earth, of every process of evolution and of many scientific riddles, and that it is supported by analogy throughout the whole realm of nature, is merely corroborative evidence, although of the strongest kind.

Apart from such additional evidence—and much more, equally potent, that is available—it is actually a part, and a vital part, of the original Christian doctrine. It is a belief which, with its natural corollaries, is capable of bringing solace and hope to numerous suffering individuals; during the Great War it would have brightened the whole outlook upon life for millions of those who were bereaved; it is calculated, also, when rightly understood, to inspire all towards a realization of the highest that is in them, and thus to simplify all moral problems. And yet this doctrine is obscured by the churches and denied to a people who are clamouring at their doors for just such a rational teaching.

One of the Reports which issued from the recent great congress of religion held at Birmingham—the *Conference on Christian Politics, Economics and Citizenship*, or "*Copec*"—is entitled *The Nature of God and His Purpose for the World.* This is a very searching inquiry into basic problems, evidently produced by some of the greatest thinkers among all denominations. It makes an honest attempt to set forth the difficulties which may beset a rational thinker in accepting, in view of the tragedies and brutalities and injustices that he sees all around him, a belief in any form of Deity. It even seems here and there to admit some justification for a sorely-tried and perplexed individual rejecting such belief. It sets out also a number of pertinent questions to which the Conference was presumably unable to find answers. *There is not a single one of these questions which could not have been answered—and answered completely and hopefully—if this very learned body of thinkers had deemed it worth their while to give even passing consideration to the basic doctrine of their own faith—the doctrine of the reincarnation of the spirit.*

Perhaps the most salient sentence in the whole

Report—a sentence which might easily be construed as the Church's own condemnation of itself—is the following (p. 62) :

> " The bewilderment and chaos of our time is due not least to its failure to produce saints and thinkers who will keep pace in their own sphere with the chemists and physicists, the biologists and psychologists, and restore to man a fresh assurance of the eternal values and a truer sense of proportion."

The Conference, unfortunately, then proceeds immediately to offer a somewhat patronizing apology for the activities of the exponents of the sciences; whereas a sincere apology on behalf of the churches, for their suppression and discounting of all saints and advanced thinkers, whether lay or ecclesiastical, would seem to be more in keeping with the actual state of affairs. It will be noticed that this extract from the " Copec " report corresponds exceedingly closely with the paragraph from *Mystic Christianity* quoted at the head of this chapter; both indicate the only line of action by which the churches can save themselves from total extinction as an influence for religious enlightenment or as a moral force.

Of course the orthodox reply to such criticism as the above is that the people should " have faith " in the church's teaching, in spite of all contradictory evidence whatever—" the faith of a little child." Now the faith of a little child is a very beautiful thing, but it is not at all a suitable equipment for a grown and reasoning man; and it is certainly not inherent in the majority of those persons with whom we are more particularly concerned. Faith must be strengthened by experience as experience widens the outlook, by the testing and trying out of problems and dangers for oneself. The little child may believe its parent's assertion that if it cuts its finger with a knife

it will suffer pain and be unhappy; but when it has by sad experience acquired an intimate knowledge of that cutting process, its faith in the original assertion is infinitely strengthened and it becomes quite ready to accept without the least question the warning that if it falls out of the window it may be killed. The faith which comes from experience in small things, *and from a clear understanding of the law,* is a far more valuable possession. It is as far in advance of the unquestioning acceptance of the child as is the positive *virtue* of a man or woman of high principles, surrounded but untouched by almost overwhelming temptation, in advance of, and on a higher plane than, the negative quality of pure *innocence* in the untried child. The difference is exactly analogous.

It is this higher quality of faith which the churches should demand of humanity to-day, this faith of the grown man who has grasped and accepted the working of the law, so far as he is able to understand it, and finding it to satisfy the logical questionings of his awakening intellect, and realizing at the same time the limitations of that human intellect, is, therefore, prepared to accept in pure faith further possibilities which he is not yet able directly to comprehend.

Before, therefore, the Church is in a position to insist upon its pupils displaying the virtue of faith, it would seem necessary that it should acquaint its ministers with at least the elementary facts of its own doctrine, and familiarize them with the first principles of the working of the great cosmic law behind those facts, in order that it may lead its disciples for the first few steps along the path of true faith.

We have suggested that the clergy as a whole are unaware of the most elementary facts concerning the esoteric aspect of the Christian doctrine, and for that reason we find that the normal Church service appears, except to a small minority of initiates, as a vitiated

and soulless proceeding. The difference to be found at a Christian service where the preacher himself is an initiate, whose mind is illumined by a deep knowledge of religious truths—which are also found to be scientific truths—is most marked. The writer knows of one such sanctuary in London. There may be others.

Here the form of service is modified. Much time is given to silence and meditation in place of the hasty repetition of set forms of words; such supplications as are used are pronounced slowly, and with due regard to the full significance of every word, and in the same spirit are they followed by an instructed congregation. The address is a logically appreciable exposition of the same Christian doctrine and mystic truth suited to the intelligence of the hearers. Questions upon any puzzling point of belief, or upon the application of religious principles to everyday difficulties of life, may be written out before the service by any of the congregation, and these are expounded during the address. In this way is religion closely correlated to the problems of daily life and conduct. The service, for these and other reasons, is intensely *interesting;* its logic appeals to the head at the same time as its ritual appeals to the heart; the intuitive faith of the worshippers is strengthened an hundredfold by the basis of intellectual material upon which it is built. Those who enter as unbelievers, but with an open mind, can scarcely escape receiving conviction from the indisputable logic and satisfying completeness of this teaching; at the least they will return home with much food for furious thought. The same could hardly be said of the service or teaching to be found at one among one thousand of those sanctuaries where the intellectual light has not yet penetrated.

And this teaching, be it noted, is nothing new or unorthodox, no new religion; it is as old as Christianity

itself; it is nothing more or less than the orthodox Christian doctrine stripped of all the parasitic falsehoods that have grown up about it, and enriched again with its due component of those ancient truths which the Established Church, at its very foundation, rejected.

A faith built upon such a solid basis of knowledge is indeed a faith worth possessing; it is an unassailable fortification of the soul against wrongdoing—as much more complete than the faith which blindly accepts arbitrary dogma (and occasionally acts upon it) as is that adult wisdom gained from experience of more value than the second-hand and half-assimilated knowledge imparted at the maternal apron-string.

And in this particular sanctuary of true Christianity there is something more than a realization of collective worship and constructive teaching. No thinking man or woman can ever leave a service there without being spiritually enriched and mentally stimulated, without having received new light upon some aspect or other of the divine plan, without having had started in his mind absorbing trains of thought which himself can pursue unaided to their illuminating issue. This enlightened teaching should surely be made available in every church in the land? It is precisely the treatment of religion for which the British, and other, peoples are clamouring to-day; for the lack of which a proportion, particularly of the younger generation, are backsliding into materialism, agnosticism, atheism, or being driven to take part in dangerous " spiritualistic " experiments. The writer would unhesitatingly assert that, were the Church able immediately to reorganize its presentation of the Christian doctrine upon these lines—the true esoteric Christian lines—its places of worship in this country would be filled to overflowing at every service before the changed condition had been in operation for twelve months. And an immediate improvement

would quite automatically set in among all undesirable moral conditions.

Why are the esoteric truths generally allowed to filter through to the people through a number of secular, and often tainted, channels? It is difficult to believe that the hierarchy of the Church of England has so long obscured these truths that they are now unaware of their very existence; yet such indeed may be the case. At least the Inner Doctrine is still there,[1] but it should remain an Inner Doctrine no longer. The Master warned His disciples against the casting of pearls before swine, meaning that the higher teaching should be imparted only to those spiritually advanced and mentally equipped to understand them, that the gross and the uneducated would merely trample them underfoot. The people of this country at large have now reached a stage of spiritual aspiration and intellectual advancement when the simpler esoteric truths need no longer be withheld

[1] " The teaching regarding the Immanent God lies at the foundation of all the Mystic teachings of all peoples, races and times. No matter under what names the teaching is promulgated—no matter what the name of the creed or religion in which it is embedded—it is still the Truth regarding the God immanent in all forms of life, force and matter. And it is always found forming the Secret Doctrine of the philosophy, creed or religion. The Outer Teaching generally confines itself to the instruction of the undeveloped minds of the people, and cloaks the real Truth behind some conception of a Personal Deity, or Deities—gods and demi-gods—who are supposed to dwell afar off in some heavenly realm—some great Being who created the world and left it to run itself, giving it but occasional attention. . . . But the Secret Doctrine or Esoteric Teaching of all religions has brushed aside these primitive conceptions, and teaches the Truth of the Immanent God—the Power inherent and abiding in all life and manifestations. And Christianity is no exception to the rule, and in its declaration of faith in the Holy Ghost its esoteric principle is stated."

—*Mystic Christianity*, p. 207.

from them; they are entitled and qualified to understand them, for the exoteric teachings have failed to satisfy.

When, as is bound to occur in the not distant future, with or without the co-operation of the Church, the Inner Teaching begins to be widely accepted there will automatically ensue a profound alteration in the general outlook upon questions of morality of all kinds. It is quite impossible for an individual sincerely to accept the full Christian faith and teaching without finding that in doing so he automatically effects a far-reaching and progressive change for the better in his daily life and dealings with his fellows and in his personal attitude towards the Divinity.

Such an influence as this, when it can be brought to bear, is going to have a more direct, intimate and lasting effect upon our special moral problem than could all the laws and regulations that could be passed in a century; it will be a greater force for good than the foundation of any number of new Homes or institutions, which are palliative measures only, merely scratching the surface of the problem.

And this prodigiously powerful counter-current can best be set in motion by the Church, if the Church can by any means be aroused from its present trance-like sleep. Signs of such awakening are already apparent even in the Church, but the state of full consciousness and activity is yet afar off. The Church needs to shed many age-old encumbrances; it must purge itself of petty jealousies, sectarian disputes, word-triflings and intolerances. It must awaken to the fact that all inspired religious beliefs are but so many facets of the diamond of the One Truth; yes, further, that even the heathen idol-worship serves its own good purpose —in leading its votaries by the hard road of experience, to a realization of the impotence of gods of wood and stone and of the sinful waste of devotional energy expended in their direction. The Church has no

right to attempt to shatter even these beliefs until it has to offer in their place a doctrine of truth most carefully graded to suit the undeveloped mentality of primitive peoples. Its missionary efforts were far better directed upon problems nearer home.

The collective mind of the Church would indeed seem to need much broadening. The writer recently had the interesting experience of attending a conference convened by the Primate of All England. One of the chief objects of this conference was to consider the desirability of an organized effort being made to raise the standard of public opinion with regard to the relations between men and women. It was unanimously agreed by those present among whom, in addition to the majority of ecclesiastical delegates, there was included a considerable number of lay representatives—doctors, social workers and others—that any appeal or campaign must be non-sectarian and non-exclusive as regards religion. Many of the clergy spoke at this conference, advancing opinions as to what form such an appeal should take and how it could best be disseminated. It was most interesting to observe that, although these speakers usually prefaced their remarks by emphasizing the essential need, and their personal readiness, for broad-minded co-operation, and for drawing up a document so worded that representatives of all denominations would be enabled to attach their signatures thereto, they yet invariably concluded by an observation to the effect that, although the more comprehensive effort might have its uses, it was, of course, as every Christian there present would realize, only through the Christian grace that any really lasting good could be accomplished.

Now the writer does not challenge the essential truth of such concluding remarks. He wishes to suggest, however, that it is high time that the Church should be brought to realize the fact that it does not

by any means hold a monopoly of the quality of Christian grace, and that it will remain as ineffective as ever until it approaches this realization; that it cannot even begin to rival certain other religions in their vastly superior understanding of the universal truths underlying its own Christian doctrine. It is obvious also that the concluding remarks of these speakers at the conference prove conclusively that, for an average orthodox incumbent of the Established Church actually to broaden in practice his mental outlook upon religious matters—try he never so hard—is almost a constitutional impossibility.

At this same conference of clerical broad-mindedness it is worthy of remark also that a very eminent divine made a statement—which was not unanimously endorsed—to the effect that no possible combination of circumstances whatever can justify divorce; that it is better that the few should suffer great hardship than that the general moral standard as regards marriage should thus be lowered. Comment is needless.

The writer has devoted considerable space to the consideration of what appear to him to be lamentable shortcomings on the part of the Established Church, and has been forced, in order to make good his argument, to stray into rather wide but really very relevant generalizations. He regards the defection of the exponents of religion as the very mainspring of the continuance of wrongdoing in the mass, and a possible ecclesiastical awakening as the most promising and powerful counter-influence to be hoped for in the future. The intimate connection of the religious attitude, and of the efficiency of the preceptors of religion — of whatsoever denomination — with our special problem becomes at once apparent when we call to mind the fact that nearly all the rescue and preventive work undertaken in this country lies under the direct administration of religious bodies. It is

here that we must fire our first shot of blasting powder if we aim at erecting a more substantial and better illuminated structure on the foundations of the old, and a book on the present subject would not be complete, would not indeed begin to fulfil its function, without a close consideration of the frailties and deficiencies of the present dispensation.

We are concerned with many different religious denominations which touch the rescue and preventive problem: there may be some even more narrow in their vision and effete in their exposition than is the Established Church. But it is to the Established Church that we have to look as the accepted and responsible ecclesiastical authority of this country; it should wield the greatest influence and power; for this reason we have ventured to direct our criticism at the chief delinquent. We have been obliged, in the interests of truth, to record many unsatisfactory features, and to accuse the Church as a whole of mental indolence and lack of spiritual vision. It is satisfactory to be able to record, also, in conclusion, that signs of an awakening of the Church are by no means lacking to-day. There are straws to indicate the stirring, if not as yet the direction, of the wind. The "Copec" reports already referred to show a really broad-minded comprehension of the difficulties, although, unhappily, they reveal also the Church's determination not to employ, or its failure even to see, the most powerful weapon for good that lies ready to its hand.

It is reported that the Bishop of Liverpool has lately thrown open the new Liverpool Cathedral to "all men of goodwill without regard to creed or manner," and has invited a wide co-operation for Church reunion.

Again, stimulated by recent demonstrations of "faith healing"—once more, be it noted, carried out by a *layman*—another divine has published his intention of issuing a pastoral letter to his clergy

upon this subject. Now, "mental healing" comes immediately within the province and duty of an awakened Church, as also, at a later stage, does the much rarer and more perfect process of "spiritual healing." Examples of these abound in the New Testament, and the duty of the Church to heal the sick in this manner is therein also plainly enjoined. Such matters have a very direct bearing upon certain aspects of our moral problem, but it would be useless at the present stage of development of these arts to enter into detailed particulars. Although this duty and privilege of mental and spiritual healing is as yet only faintly realized by the Church, although its ministers at large are still profoundly ignorant of both the science and art of the healing processes, this recognition of their reality and awakening of interest in the subject is yet another hopeful sign of the times. The report of the Committee appointed by the Archbishop of Canterbury to inquire into the subject of "spiritual healing," and published in the year 1923 under the title, *The Ministry of Healing*, goes fairly deeply into the matter from both the historical and practical points of view. One paragraph of this Report appears to have a particular application to our moral problem, as showing the Church's realization (at least as regards those on the Committee) of the possibility of applying spiritual methods of healing to mental and moral, as well as to physical, disabilities. The Report (p. 19) says:

> "Whilst religious methods are applicable to all cases of sickness, they would seem to be most appropriate where moral or intellectual difficulties and perplexities have contributed to the disorder. These deep-lying roots of evil should be dealt with before any specifically bodily healing is attempted; otherwise we shall be in danger of dealing with symptoms and neglecting causes; in which case no

thorough or permanent cure can be hoped for. This preliminary treatment requires some real knowledge not only of moral theology but also of psychology, so that it is desirable that clergymen who give spiritual direction should be adequately trained and so enabled to give clear and practical guidance."

Now, apart altogether from the hopeful note which this paragraph strikes, prophetic, perhaps, of the inauguration in the future of a true Ministry of Healing under the ægis of the Church, the reader will note one very interesting fact.

The Church has made a discovery! It is embodied in the last few lines of the paragraph quoted.

Just as soon as the Church begins to descend from the somewhat nebulous realms of the "cure of souls" to a more practical activity in the cure of minds and bodies—where results, present or absent, good or bad, are more definitely and more swiftly traceable—then the Church makes the following invaluable discovery—that the treatment (in the Church's own words) "*requires some real knowledge*, not only of moral theology, but also of psychology"; and again, "that it is desirable that clergymen who give spiritual direction *should be adequately trained*. . . ."

Now, if the Church, descending to grapple with mental and material ills, has the realization of this need of its ministers for knowledge of *facts*, and training in methods thus forced upon it, are we not entitled to suggest (as we seem to remember having suggested in more than one place already) that a similar acquisition of "real knowledge," and the means also for using it, might be found useful—nay, indispensable—in the more elusive work of the cure and guidance of souls also?

Perhaps the Church as a whole, in attempting the healing of minds and bodies by the invocation of

spiritual grace, is, in effect, being forced to descend to function upon a more material plane, in order that it may learn this lesson of the indispensable quality of *knowledge* and preparation; in order that it may afterwards carry the fruits of such experience back to its native realms of spiritual effort—is developing in itself, in fact, an epitome of one cycle of that periodical reincarnation of the spirit of man, the truth of which the Church so vehemently denies.

If the Church is indeed awakening to a realization of its first duty, which is logically to educate the intellectually advanced people of to-day in the basic facts of their doctrine, without regard to any petty sectarian distinctions, let us fervently hope that it will save itself alive by qualifying its ministers while there is yet time with the needful knowledge for imparting this instruction before the people as a whole arrive at an understanding far greater than has as yet been vouchsafed to the divines.

PART V

SOUNDINGS

CHAPTER XVII

SOUNDINGS

" Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting;
The Soul that rises in us, our life's Star,
Hath had elsewhere its setting,
And cometh from afar;
Not in entire forgetfulness,
And not in utter nakedness,
But trailing clouds of glory do we come
From God, who is our home."
—*Wordsworth, " Ode on Intimations of Immortality from Recollections of Early Childhood."*

" Who has not this—
Ever dying and bringing to birth—
Will aye remain a sorry guest
Upon this dismal earth."
—*Goethe.*

A " working hypothesis "—Its application to all moral problems—Its ancient authenticity and universal nature —Identical with the Christian belief—A philosophy, a science and a religion in one—Three alternative beliefs examined—A descriptive outline and a few relevant facts—The progress of the spirit of Man—Involution and evolution—From innocence to purity, ignorance to knowledge and impotence to power—The Law of Consequence—Its practical application to moral problems— Need for a wider outlook and universal co-operation— The only way of escape.

In the last few chapters there are some statements and suggestions which will certainly be denied and violently opposed or ridiculed by the orthodox exponents of certain religious persuasions. The

writer does not expect these assertions in their bald and unqualified form to be accepted by, or even to receive consideration from, lay persons either—excepting those who already have an intuitive perception of their truth. He would like to set out here a certain number of adjuvant facts for the consideration of the thoughtful, and to deduce also from these some helpful suggestions for application to our moral problem. Whatever may be the writer's convictions he is not here attempting the conversion of the reader to the same lines of thought. If he strongly upholds certain statements which he believes to be facts it is because they have, if true, a most important bearing upon our problem. Nothing is further from his intention than an effort to proselytize, but while all sects and denominations remain in the habit of dogmatically asserting their own particular beliefs, and uncompromisingly denying rival creeds, he feels that he may reasonably claim the right to present some ancient and neglected truths and to advance what he considers at the least to be a good working hypothesis which may be applied successfully to general and particular problems of vital import.

This " working hypothesis " is no new thing; it is older far than any creed of to-day; it is older even than beliefs whose very names are lost in the mists of past ages; it includes in its comprehensive grasp the underlying truths of all beliefs. It is for this reason alone worthy of the serious consideration of all thinking men and women. Amongst the doubts and perplexities, the cruelties and horrors and injustices, of this material age it is difficult to find an explanation or a simple theory which will reconcile all apparently conflicting facts, which can bring comfort and hope in all tribulations. Yet of such quality is the belief briefly to be referred to here.

It is no extravagant claim to make for this ancient doctrine that it not only reconciles completely all

inspired religions with each other, and the apparent contradictions of Science, Philosophy and Religion, and resolves all doubts as to the existence of a God, but that it shows also the reason for and the use of all pain and suffering and apparent injustice as well as of good fortune and happiness; it removes the fear of death and lessens the dread of dying; it throws into true perspective all the inequalities of life, which are now enlarged in our eyes through too close proximity. Its full acceptance inspires hope and courage and inevitably drives the believer ultimately into an expression of the highest that is in him. It is, in fact, the most powerful moral force available.

All known facts whatever fit into this doctrine as pieces into a puzzle. In addition to the functions already enumerated it will, for example, explain and correlate into one rational, comprehensive and non-contradictory hypothesis such widely diverse matters and problems—amongst an infinitude of others—as: the nature of life after death; the gifts of genius and of child prodigies; the mysteries of sleep, dreams and trance; subjective delusions and apparitions; all the various forms of mania and imbecility; the phenomena observed by drowning persons; all psychic phenomena, including telepathy, clairvoyance and various forms of prevision, voluntary or involuntary prescience of future events, "materialization" and alleged "spirit" messages; mesmerism and hypnosis and all similar manifestations: it reveals the place of the Earth as well as of the other planets of the Solar System, and of more distant systems, in the One Scheme; it explains the riddles of animal and plant life; the migrations of animals; animal prodigies; and many other phenomena in the realm of Nature: it gives meaning to the alleged memory by children of previous lives; the "recognition" by some persons of houses and of places never before visited in this life: it reveals the true sphere of music; the mysteries

of sex; the functions of certain bodily organs regarding which medical science is as yet ignorant; other abstruse medical puzzles; the deep significance of certain early stages in the development of the human fœtus: it explains the "legend" of the lost continent of Atlantis; the nature of the electrical and other ethers; the origin in actual fact of the nimbus or "halo"; the processes of mental healing and spiritual healing; all phenomena of the "subconscious" and "superconscious" minds, and—*the origin and destiny of the human spirit.*

This philosophy—which is also a science and a religion—is *universal* in its nature: it is not to be labelled as Theosophy, as Hinduism, Buddhism, Brahminism, Rosicrucianism, or attached to any other narrowing title; it may not be so limited and confined; it comprehends the truths immanent in all of these, and the name which this truth bears at any given time, or the proportion of the whole truth at any given time recognized, alters its character not a whit. At the present time this doctrine is in evidence in the Western World under the name of Christianity—the *esoteric* Christianity—and it has been vastly enriched by the example and teachings of the Founder of this doctrine; but its base is eternal and universal Truth. Its universal character is recognized by many, but least of all—paradoxically—by the professed orthodox Christians.

We have already stated that one of the basic principles of this great conception is that of progressive spiritual development and unfoldment of the *ego*—the individual "I"—through successive reincarnations. Let us briefly examine three alternative beliefs—(*a*) that of the atheist and materialist, (*b*) that of the orthodox Christian and, (*c*) that of the enlightened Christian:

(*a*) The materialist believes that this universe, all

manifest creation and all evolution is the result of a purely accidental reaction between material substances worked upon by " natural " forces; that the life of each individual begins in the womb and ends at the death of the body; that all " supernatural " manifestations and experiences are to be explained on the score of hallucination, or derangement of the material sensory mechanism. That life is, in effect, an accident, and entirely without purpose.

(*b*) The orthodox Christian believes, with others, that God created this world in six " days "—taking no account of other worlds than this microcosmic Earth; that every human being possesses a soul, which is newly created by the Divinity at birth, having had no previous separate existence; that, during earth life the soul is worked upon by the warring powers of good and evil; that at death it passes either to an abode of bliss—the orthodox account of which is distinctly uninteresting and unattractive to the normal individual—or to a place of everlasting torment; that such alternative fate is decided by the conduct of the individual—under whatever advantages or crushing disadvantages he may have been born—during a term of responsible conscious existence which is as but a second or less when compared even with the lowest scientific estimate of the age of the earth; that salvation or condemnation are dependent chiefly upon the acceptance of an arbitrary and irrational dogma dispensed by a body of very ordinary mortals who can adduce no certain proof in support of their teachings.

(*c*) The enlightened Christian, or initiate of any other inspired religion, who begins to perceive the great cosmic truths underlying the exoteric

teaching and more distinctly set forth in the esoteric doctrine, believes that all creation—including that of one mote which is known to him as Earth—is a manifestation of the creative activity of one divine Being; he recognizes the story of Genesis as an allegorical, but accurate, account of the creative process; he knows that each individual spirit is a part of the divine essence, differentiated *in* God at the creation, and forced to descend from that lofty estate into material forms and to assume material bodies in order to gain experience, to learn the right use of free-will, to acquire power over material and spiritual forces, to the end that each may ultimately evolve creative ability also; he believes that this object is being attained through a process of successive incarnate existences occupying æons of time and governed by immutable laws, alternated with periods of even greater evolutionary activity in higher realms between the physical lives; that there is in very truth for every soul a heaven and a purgatory, *but only such as each soul, by its own actions automatically makes for itself* either here or hereafter; that such states of bliss or of acute suffering are not to be regarded so much as rewards or punishments, but as necessary training grounds both; that all will ultimately attain the highest spiritual development, some earlier than others, since each spirit is an indispensable part of the One.

(*a*) Regarding the first—the materialist's—belief we need not say more than that its adherents are already beginning to find the ground cut away from under their feet by the growing realization that apparently solid matter is in reality the most evanescent and impermanent thing of which we are able to take

cognizance, that it can be traced to a mere temporary disturbance or orderly manifestation of force within the most tenuous medium known to modern science; we are approaching the realization that matter is no more than a manifestation of energy or force, that force is a manifestation of mind, and that the moving principle at the back of mind is spirit—that solid matter is, in fact, nothing more or less than a crystallization of spirit.

(*b*) The outstanding features of the orthodox Christian belief are its childish inconsistencies, injustices and absence of logical support. The single-life theory cannot pretend to account for such facts as the outstanding inequalities of physical, mental or spiritual equipment with which different individual souls begin their assumed first and only pilgrimage through matter. Such difficulties can be glossed over by ascribing genius on the one hand or imbecility on the other, the possession of a strong and perfect body or mind, or a frail or deformed one, to heredity—which merely carries the inquiry one step backward—or to gifts or afflictions of God; by the statement that apparent injustices or undeserved sufferings will be recompensed in a higher world: there is, however, a far more credible, logical, and equally reverent explanation, than this.

Again, touching the salving virtue of faith, the orthodox Christian's attitude towards those who have not the opportunity of hearing the Word is not clear; no sane person could surely suppose that such are condemned from the beginning. The doctrine is, however, unequivocal regarding the destiny of those who hear and believe not—eternal damnation. In spite of this it is regarded as a Christian mission of the highest virtue to carry the word amongst primitive peoples of whom an exceedingly small proportion can be expected to be converted to the faith, the remainder being inevitably damned eternally—if there is any

virtue in logic—by the same highly Christian act of enlightenment which is the means of "saving" a mere fraction of their brethren. Can a just and merciful God for one moment be supposed to countenance such arrogant imbecility?

(*c*) In the more enlightened belief, however—the esoteric Christian teaching—there is justice and hope for all. This belief is clearly set out in all the ancient inspired religions, its essentials are to be found in the Egyptian *Book of the Dead*; it is plainly stated in Genesis, in the Gospels, in the Book of Revelations; it is writ large in the book of Nature; it is hourly confirmed, for those who have eyes to see, in their daily life and experience upon earth.

It teaches that spiritual forces are governed by immutable natural laws, just as are material forces; that the laws of cause and effect, of the transmutation and conservation of energy, operate in the higher ethers as inexorably as they do in the lower. It teaches that each individual created—differentiated in God—confronts its long process of coming development as a pure spirit, a part of the Divinity, incapable at first of free action, having purity—a negative quality—only; that it is required to descend into matter by a process of *involution*, during which its pristine purity is temporarily clouded, to rise again, through a process of *evolution*, and regain its original purity, *together with experience and the power to function either in matter or spirit*. Its final state—again let us note the significance—is as different from the original as is the negative state of purity of the infant—powerless to know or do right or wrong—different from that virtuous character of a man or woman who has lived a long life of purity amidst surroundings of temptation and with the ability to choose either good or evil—a very positive state of virtue.

This doctrine teaches that the nations of the

western world are even now only just beginning the *evolutionary* half-cycle of their unfoldment—rising from the nadir of the physical; that some savage peoples are incarnations of spirits which have not yet completed their *involutionary* process, that these spirits, in fact, are not yet completely indwelling, incarnate; that there was a time in our own early development when it was as difficult for the *involving* spirit of man, fresh from the divine ocean of spirit, and living as yet chiefly in that realm, to realize that it possessed a physical body as it is for some men to-day, deeply enmeshed in the physical, to believe that they have souls—or, more accurately speaking, to realize that they *are* spirits and *possess* bodies. In early days, indeed, the attributes of physical birth and death were the reverse of what they are to-day, physical death appearing to the spirit as a welcome re-birth into its true home, the untrammelled realm of spirit, while physical birth came as a temporary death-like veiling from this realm.

These teachings are supported strongly by known facts. The early cataclysms and physical convulsions of the solidifying earth—crystallizing from spirit to ether, from ether to gas, from gas to liquid, and from liquid to semi-solid and solid—and the physical brutalities which flourished widely in early times, had their own special use and purpose in teaching the half-awakened *involving* spirit of man, through the medium of physical pain, that it possessed a physical vehicle; they were designed to make the physical life more real to him, to induce him to hold it less cheaply. Even the incompletely incarnated savage of to-day does not feel pain from a severe bodily injury so acutely as a member of a highly organized intellectual race, completely indwelling in the body, would suffer from an equal experience. An indication that highly developed man is now beginning his period of *evolution*, of drawing out of the physical, is given by

the comparatively recent discovery that it is possible under certain conditions to inhibit physical pain by an effort of the trained will; a still stronger piece of evidence is that, just as primitive man needed to experience pain in the physical body in order that his spirit might be born, as it were, into the world of matter, so are we to-day beginning our *evolution* by experiencing acute birth-pains on a higher mental plane which shall herald us into the world of spirit again; a new anguish of the spirit is needed that material man may be brought to recognize the spirit that is in him; it is a natural process of birth and it gives a reason for all the trouble and tragedy and spiritual unrest of the times.

Again, the involving savage still retains a greater proportion of his psychic powers, as witnessed by his ability to exhibit many phenomena not to be explained by natural physical laws as known to western science; he is still to some extent consciously active in the spiritual world or the lower levels thereof.

The other chief awakening influence, besides physical pain, which was employed to bring incarnating man to a realization of his material estate, was the use of the sex function; in this way the partly incarnated spirit was brought into intimate contact with the physical; it ate of the " Tree of Knowledge " and it came to *know* its partner in the physical act, and to have its eyes opened to the phenomena of the material world. This is the reason why the expression " to know " is used in this connection and has survived even until within historical times, as many phrases in the Scriptures and elsewhere bear witness.

This immense progress of the spirit from mere innocence to instructed virtue and power is being accomplished through countless incarnations, during which all undesirable tendencies are to be removed. The doctrine shows the truth—vitally important to our moral problem—that we are not punished by an

avenging Deity *for* our transgressions, but inevitably and automatically, quite justly and impartially and under a great unchanging natural Law of Consequence, *by* those very sins against the higher Law. The punishment invariably fits the crime, which, in fact, creates it. Here we have the key to all apparently unjust trials and sorrows met with in the life on earth. They are the inevitable results of sins against the Law in this life or a previous one; they are inevitable as physical penalties following upon physical excesses and they are dispensed under a precisely similar rule.

Would not a realization of this simple fact have a far-reaching effect upon men and women tempted by their physical or mental desires to moral transgressions of whatever kind?

A lazy man may feel a desire to lie down in the mud of the street, and be deterred from doing so by the knowledge that he will almost certainly be run over; but he has reached a higher stage of development when he resists the impulse because he knows that the mud of the street will stick to him whether he gets run over or not. Similarly, a man may be deterred from wrongdoing if he believes that he must inevitably suffer unpleasant consequences at some future time, in this life or another; that is no great virtue. But the full realization of his spiritual origin and destiny, which accompanies an understanding of the Law of Consequence, brings with it also in time a higher desire—the wish to keep himself untainted from all such contamination. Man has to learn to do right, and to avoid wrongdoing, quite independently of any hope of rewards or fear of penalties; but the rewards and penalties are necessary adjuncts of the early stages of training to point the right and wrong paths. Man himself uses this same system in training animals to do his will, the motive compelling obedience in the intelligent animal gradually changing from that of cupidity or fear to

that of a desire to please its master or a delight in performing the task itself.

Thus it is seen that much of the present sin and suffering in the world is *unavoidable*, and will be so until all old causes have been redeemed under the great Law, and no new causes are set up by man. Sin and suffering are at present necessary evils, designed to point out the only way of salvation. Indeed, to remove all opportunities for wrongdoing, if such a thing were possible, might even be regarded as a retrograde step in evolution, at least as regards those individuals who are sufficiently far advanced intellectually to be capable of discerning the difference between right and wrong. These two paths must be available to them equally, or they can learn nothing and proceed no further in their spiritual growth.

But, if sin and suffering is still to a large extent unavoidable, *ignorance is not*. There is in the Army a maxim that "ignorance of orders is no excuse": in life, ignorance of the Law may be held to explain sin, but it will not excuse it nor stave off one jot of the due punishment. "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap"—the orders are plain to be read by all, and a punishment will inevitably fall equally upon those who read and ignore and those of the doctrinarians who obscure the meaning of the orders by interpolating their own rendering of them; theirs is indeed a heavy responsibility.

Thus it will be seen that the very best thing that we can hope to do to improve the present unsatisfactory moral position is, as always, to help the offenders against the Law to help themselves. And the most efficacious means available for doing this is to educate them in the elements of the working of the Law. For those who are as yet mentally unready to grasp the Truth by the Way of the Head, the Way of the Heart is always open still. They may continue to receive the unexplained dogmas of the faith until

such time as they are able to assimilate also the same truths presented to the intellect; but, and this is important, the dogmatic teaching must first be purged of all falsehoods, and so presented that the inner truths are not too deeply concealed, that they may be found as soon as ever the developing and questing intelligence begins to scent them.

The above account of the great universal doctrine is but the merest shadow of an outline. There are a myriad other pearls, of far greater price, available for the mere seeking to those who are qualified to receive them. To give any further description in the present work would probably defeat our immediate object and lead us also too far from our specialized problem. The writer does not pretend to anything beyond the most elementary acquaintance with this great doctrine —a subject of the most immediate and vital importance to every living man and woman. He is aware that very many of his readers will have advanced far out of his sight along the same path of knowledge; on the other hand a far greater number will not yet have discovered the path at all. And perhaps for the very reason that he is not an adept, the writer is in the better position to point out the entrance to others, since he has not yet forgotten the rocks upon which he at first stumbled at the opening. He is already convinced that on this way alone can all workers find the solutions to their many and various difficulties.

At the first few steps doubt and a justifiable scepticism are often found to obscure the way, but as more and more facts are taken into account, as the mass of logical evidence and illuminating analogy mounts up, demarcating the way upon either side, a great light breaks forth and the acceptance of this basic doctrine of the nature of existence becomes irresistible to the thoughtful mind.

If we are to make an effective onslaught upon the

moral problem it is first of all necessary for those entrusted with the task to reconnoitre the country with the greatest thoroughness, for workers of all sects and denominations and beliefs to descend from their own particular exclusive chariots and examine the very metal of the road. We need, in fact, another, and far more comprehensive "Copec," to consider existing facts and problems, not primarily from the Christian point of view, but from the universal. The inevitable conclusion will show the two view-points to be one and the same, for the orthodox Christian outlook will have become vastly enriched—transmuted, in fact, to that of the Esoteric Doctrine of Christianity—which is also the Universal Doctrine.

We shall then be able to see our way clearly, not only to the right treatment of the problems of sex, but of all moral and social problems whatever. We shall not hope for an instantaneous, or even an early, cure. We shall, however, expect and be empowered to effect an immediate improvement. We shall recognize those evils that persist in spite of our best efforts as necessary influences, as natural forces which, while seeming to work against our efforts, are in reality working most powerfully with us. We shall, in fact, avoid the errors of haste, so common to-day amongst those who intuitively perceive the inevitable ultimate materialization of great and grand conceptions, of which the universal brotherhood of man and the abolition of war may be cited as examples. We shall realize that, although these things must come, as our better moral conditions must come, their full fruition is not for our time; that we can but sow the seeds and tend the young plant; that an attempt to force their growth while more than half the world is as yet unready for them must inevitably defeat its own object, and throw back the orderly cultivation again into the weedy rubble of chaos.

In such an inquiry we shall discover that, for our

own special problem, the only two effective and infallible weapons are, firstly the rationalization of religion, and secondly, a close acquaintance with and realization of the alternative creative attributes of the sex function. All other measures are palliative only.

From the first, after a long and bitter fight against the deep-rooted obstruction of blind orthodoxy, we shall ultimately gain many advantages. We shall be able to present a logical teaching, based on *knowledge,* and properly graduated to suit the mental capacities of pupils at different stages of advancement. There will be nothing vague or unsatisfying in this teaching; it will be designed to show how each man's individual destiny is, under the Law, in his own keeping; that a period of sinful living invariably brings in its wake a period of suffering of a kind designed to burn out in the cleansing fire the tendency to that particular sin; that, while the arbitrary " forgiveness of sins " is not included in the Law, atonement—the true " repentance " of Biblical teaching—is; that a period of right living may neutralize the stored and imminent causes and stave off the punishment—again quite automatically and under the Law. This teaching will show the individual the two alternative ways to the same unavoidable and splendid destiny—the long and gloomy way of sin and suffering and perplexity, in which he is buffeted about by the backwash of every wrong cause that he himself has ignorantly or wittingly set in motion; and the shorter, but at first far harder way—the way of peace and understanding, in which, knowing the Law, captain of his soul and master of his destiny, he sets his own course straight for the distant goal, recognizing whatever buffeting may betide as a just retribution for his previous errors, and laying up no more trouble for the future. A knowledge of these things must work like leaven in the dough of materialistic influences and in due

course raise the standard of conduct and intention of the mass to a far higher level.

In a right understanding also of the manifold nature of the creative force of sex, rescue workers will find many helpful suggestions for practical application to their problem. Efforts will be made to meet special dangers at critical times in the life of the individual and the community, and to provide alternative outlets for this insuppressible force. A wide campaign of real enlightenment will be initiated, aiming to bring about a true understanding of the unfolding powers behind the mere physical facts and a realization of the sacred quality and supreme potentialities of this divine gift, of the debasing effects of its prostitution at the bidding of the lower self.

Approaching the problem thus in the light of true understanding, workers in all fields will be induced to avoid as far as may be possible all merely palliative measures and to concentrate energy upon attacking the roots of the trouble and guarding in the only sure way against its recurrence. They will be fortified by the knowledge that each step forward upon this path is a firm advance; that their successes are established upon the living rock; that their failures, as represented by those who persist in wrongdoing, are merely taken out of their hands for the time being into hands more capable—caught up into the ever-recurring cycle of the wise, unchanging Law, to be returned inevitably in due course, chastened through necessary suffering, and set down again within sight of the only path of escape.

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